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EVANGELINE

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# EVANGELINE

A TALE OF ACADIE

BY

HENRY W. LONGFELLOW

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WITH PREFATORY AND EXPLANATORY NOTES

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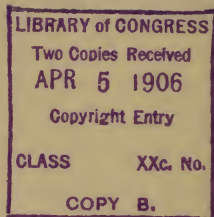
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## EVANGELINE.

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### BIOGRAPHICAL NOTICE OF THE AUTHOR.

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow was born at Portland, Maine, on the 27th of February, 1807. At the age of fourteen he entered Bowdoin College, where he studied for four years and took his degree with high honors in 1825. He was at first intended for the profession of the law, and with that view received some legal training in his father's office. But his strong preference for a literary career soon showed itself, and having been offered the newly-established professorship of languages in Bowdoin College, for the purpose of qualifying himself for the post, he visited Europe, and spent three and a half years traveling in France, Spain, Italy, Germany, Holland, and England, studying the languages and literature of these countries. In 1829 he returned to America, and entered upon the duties of his professorship. During his residence at Bowdoin College he contributed many valuable biographical articles and literary criticisms to the *North American Review*.

In 1835 he was appointed to the professorship of modern languages and belles-lettres in Harvard College. In order to become more thoroughly acquainted with the languages and literature of Northern Europe, he again left his native land and traveled more than a year in Denmark, Sweden, Holland, and North Germany. After holding his professorship in Harvard College for about twenty years, he resigned it in 1854, and settled with his family near Boston. He died March 24th, 1882.

Mr. Longfellow's principal works, with the dates of their publication, are as follows:—Translation of the Spanish Poem by Don Jorge Manrique on the Death of his Father appeared in 1833; *Outre Mer*, 1835; *Hyperion*, a romance, and *Voices of the Night*, his first

collection of poems, 1841; Ballads, and other Poems, 1842; Poems on Slavery, 1843; The Spanish Student, a play, 1845; The Poets and Poetry of Europe, and The Belfry of Bruges, 1847; Evangeline, 1848; Kavanagh, a tale, 1849; The Seaside and the Fireside, and The Golden Legend, 1851; The Song of Hiawatha, 1855; Miles Standish, 1858; Tales of a Wayside Inn, 1863; Flower de Luce, 1866; Translation of Dante, 1867-70; New England Tragedies, 1869; The Divine Tragedy, 1871; Three Books of Song, 1872; The Hanging of the Crane, 1874; Kéramos, 1878.

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#### PREFATORY NOTE.

Acadia or Acadie (the ancient name of Nova Scotia) is an extensive peninsula on the coast of British North America, originally settled by the French, and after varying fortunes finally ceded to the British by the peace of Utrecht in 1713. At this time the population consisted chiefly of French Acadians, whose wishes seem to have been little consulted in the change of government, and who were with difficulty induced to take the oath of allegiance. Special privileges were conferred upon them by the British government, and in 1749 they had increased to 18,000 persons, living in comparative comfort, and owning 60,000 head of cattle.

In the wars afterwards waged between the British and French in Canada, however, the Acadians were accused of having in various ways assisted the French from whom they were descended. On this account, and at the earnest solicitation of the British colonists, it was resolved by the government to confiscate the property of the Acadians, and to banish them from their homes. This resolution was not communicated to the people until everything was ready to carry it into effect, when the governor issued a summons calling the inhabitants together, and informed them that their whole lands, tenements, and cattle were forfeited to the crown, and that they themselves were to be conveyed in vessels to other British colonies. About seven thousand were thus forcibly removed; the rest fled to



the woods with their wives and families, where numbers perished by cold and hunger, and others managed to escape to neighboring French settlements.

The poet Longfellow has founded his story of *Evangeline* upon this expulsion of the Acadians. The poem opens with a description of the Acadian land, and the little village of Grand-Pré on the shores of the Basin of Minas, where dwelt Benedict Bellefontaine, a well-to-do farmer, and his friend and neighbor, Basil Lajeunesse, the blacksmith, together with their children, *Evangeline* the daughter of Benedict, and Gabriel the son of Basil.

The young people were lovers, and upon the day when their friends are assembled at the house of Benedict to celebrate their betrothal, the summons comes for the assembling in the village church of all the men, to hear the royal commission for the expulsion of themselves and their families and the confiscation of their property.

They are kept close prisoners in the church for four days, and on the fifth are marched down to the beach amid great confusion, hurried on board the transports, together with their wives and children, taking with them only what goods they could hastily collect. The day closes before the whole of the exiles have been shipped, and those who are left have to encamp on the shore: behind them they behold their villages in flames. Overcome with grief, the father of *Evangeline* dies during the night and in the morning he is buried on the beach by his neighbors and the village priest. Basil, Gabriel, and *Evangeline* are embarked in separate ships, and landed in different parts of the southern states of America.

For many years *Evangeline* wanders over the continent, with the priest and some of her companions in exile, seeking for Gabriel. In one of her journeys down the Mississippi to the town of St. Maur, where she has heard that Gabriel, with his father, has found a residence, her boat is passed in the night by that of her lover, who, tired of life without his betrothed, has set out on a hunting expedition to the Western Prairies. When *Evangeline* and her companions reach the home of Basil the blacksmith, they find him prosperous, being possessed of large flocks and herds, and known to all

around as Basil the herdsman. Upon hearing of the departure of Gabriel, Evangeline is inconsolable, until Basil promises to start with her the next day in pursuit of his son, and to bring him back.

They set out upon their journey, and after a long and fruitless search, arrive at the foot of the Rocky Mountains, where they find a Jesuit Mission, and hear from the priest that some days before their arrival Gabriel had left that place to go far into the northern wilds, but that he will return in the autumn. Upon hearing this Evangeline begs to stay at the Mission until the return of her lover; her wish is granted, and Basil returns alone.

After long and patient waiting, Evangeline hears that Gabriel will not return, but has gone farther still into the wilds. Leaving the Mission along with some guides returning to the lakes of the St. Lawrence, the sorrowful maiden continues her search, and on arriving at the hut of Gabriel, she finds it deserted and in ruins.

For long years she pursues her fruitless inquiries, and at length finds a home in Pennsylvania, where she becomes a Sister of Mercy. Here she has resided for many years engaged in works of charity, when a dreadful pestilence breaks out in the city, and in one of her visits to the almshouse she finds her lover stricken down by the fever. After mutual recognition Gabriel expires upon the bosom of his betrothed, while she meekly bows her head and murmurs, "Father, I thank Thee!"

Some few of the Acadian exiles found their way back to their old home, and their descendants still tell the tale of Evangeline by the evening fire.

# EVANGELINE.

A TALE OF ACADIE.

---

This is the forest primeval. The murmuring  
    pines and the hemlocks,  
Bearded with moss, and in garments green,  
    indistinct in the twilight,  
Stand like Druids of eld, with voices sad and  
    prophetic,  
Stand like harpers hoar, with beards that  
    rest on their bosoms.  
Loud from its rocky caverns, the deep-voiced  
    neighboring ocean  
Speaks, and in accents disconsolate answers 5  
    the wail of the forest.

This is the forest primeval ; but where are  
    the hearts that beneath it

1. *Primeval*. Earliest, original.

*Hemlocks*. A kind of spruce fir-trees, common in America.

3. *Druids*. Priests among the ancient people of Britain, Gaul, and Germany.

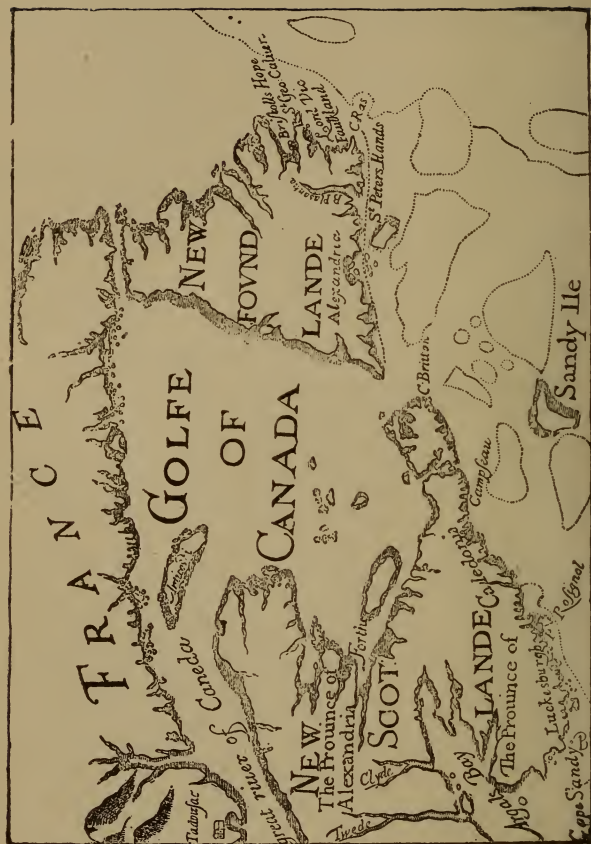
*Eld*. Old English form of *old*.

4. *Harpers hoar*. In allusion to the ancient players upon the harp, who were generally old men wearing long gray or hoary beards.

Leaped like the roe, when he hears in the  
    woodland the voice of the huntsman?  
Where is the thatch-roofed village, the home  
    of Acadian farmers, —  
Men whose lives glided on like rivers that  
    water the woodlands, 10  
Darkened by shadows of earth, but reflecting  
    an image of heaven?  
Waste are those pleasant farms, and the far-  
    mers forever departed !  
Scattered like dust and leaves, when the  
    mighty blasts of October  
Seize them, and whirl them aloft, and sprin-  
    kle them far o'er the ocean.  
Naught but tradition remains of the beautiful  
    village of Grand-Pré. 15

Ye who believe in affection that hopes,  
    and endures, and is patient,  
Ye who believe in the beauty and strength  
    of woman's devotion,  
List to the mournful tradition still sung by  
    the pines of the forest ;  
List to a Tale of Love in Acadie, none of  
    the happy.





MAP OF ACADIE (From an old print)



## PART THE FIRST.

### I.

In the Acadian land, on the shores of the  
Basin of Minas, 20  
Distant, secluded, still, the little village of  
Grand-Pré  
Lay in the fruitful valley. Vast meadows  
stretched to the eastward,  
Giving the village its name, and pasture to  
flocks without number.  
Dikes, that the hands of the farmers had  
raised with labor incessant,  
Shut out the turbulent tides; but at stated  
seasons the flood-gates 25  
Opened, and welcomed the sea to wander at  
will o'er the meadows.  
West and south there were fields of flax, and  
orchards and corn-fields  
Spreading afar and unfenced o'er the plain;  
and away to the northward

20. *Basin of Minas.* In the Bay of Fundy.

23. *Giving the village its name* (Grand-Pré). Fr. *grand*, great, and *pré*, meadow.

24. *Dikes.* Mounds of earth raised to prevent the sea from overflowing the country.

25. *Turbulent tides.* The tides of the Bay of Fundy often rise to a height of fifty feet.

*Floodgates.* Gates in the dikes for the inlet and outlet of the water.

Blomidon rose, and the forests old, and aloft  
 on the mountains  
 Sea-fogs pitched their tents, and mists from  
 the mighty Atlantic 30  
 Looked on the happy valley, but ne'er from  
 their station descended.  
 There, in the midst of its farms, reposed the  
 Acadian village.  
 Strongly built were the houses, with frames  
 of oak and of hemlock  
 Such as the peasants of Normandy built in  
 the reign of the Henries.  
 Thatched were the roofs, with dormer-win-  
 dows; and gables projecting 35  
 Over the basement below protected and  
 shaded the doorway.  
 There in the tranquil evenings of summer,  
 when brightly the sunset  
 Lighted the village street, and gilded the  
 vanes on the chimneys,  
 Matrons and maidens sat in snow-white caps  
 and in kirtles

29. *Blomidon*. A rocky headland at the entrance of the Basin of Minas.

34. *Normandy*. A northern province of France.

*Henries*. Kings of France. The Acadians emigrated from France about 1633-8.

35. *Dormer, Dormer-window*. An upright window upon the sloping roof of a house, generally in a sleeping room.

39. *Matrons*. Elderly women, mothers.

*Kirtle*. A top skirt worn over a petticoat.

Scarlet and blue and green, with distaffs  
spinning the golden 40  
Flax for the gossiping looms, whose noisy  
shuttles within doors  
Mingled their sound with the whirr of the  
wheels and the songs of the maidens.  
Solemnly down the street came the parish  
priest, and the children  
Paused in their play to kiss the hand he  
extended to bless them.  
Reverend walked he among them; and up  
rose matrons and maidens, 45  
Hailing his slow approach with words of  
affectionate welcome.  
Then came the laborers home from the field,  
and serenely the sun sank  
Down to his rest, and twilight prevailed.  
Anon from the belfry  
Softly the Angelus sounded, and over the  
roofs of the village  
Columns of pale blue smoke, like clouds of  
incense ascending, 50

40. *Distaff*. The staff or stick which holds the bunch of flax, tow, or wool in spinning.

49. *Angelus*. A bell calling to prayer, sounded morning, noon, and evening; so called from the first word (*Angelus*) of the prayer then to be repeated.

50. *Incense*. A fragrant substance burned before the altar.

Rose from a hundred hearths, the homes of  
peace and contentment.

Thus dwelt together in love these simple  
Acadian farmers,—

Dwelt in the love of God and of man.

Alike were they free from  
Fear, that reigns with the tyrant, and envy,  
the vice of republics.

Neither locks had they to their doors, nor  
bars to their windows ;

55

But their dwellings were open as day and  
the hearts of the owners ;

There the richest was poor, and the poorest  
lived in abundance.

Somewhat apart from the village, and  
nearer the Basin of Minas,  
Benedict Bellefontaine, the wealthiest farmer  
of Grand-Pré,

Dwelt on his goodly acres ; and with him  
directing his household,

60

Gentle Evangeline lived, his child, and the  
pride of the village.

Stalworth and stately in form was the man  
of seventy winters ;

62. *Stalworth* (or *Stalwart*). Bold, brave, strong. A. S. *stal-weorth*,  
worth stealing.

Hearty and hale was he, an oak that is cov-  
 ered with snow-flakes ;  
 White as the snow were his locks, and his  
 cheeks as brown as the oak-leaves.  
 Fair was she to behold, that maiden of seven-  
 teen summers, 66  
 Black were her eyes as the berry that grows  
 on the thorn by the wayside,  
 Black, yet how softly they gleamed beneath  
 the brown shade of her tresses !  
 Sweet was her breath as the breath of kine  
 that fed in the meadows,  
 When in the harvest heat she bore to the  
 reapers at noontide  
 Flagons of home-brewed ale, ah ! fair in  
 sooth was the maiden. 70  
 Fairer was she when, on Sunday morn, while  
 the bell from its turret  
 Sprinkled with holy sounds the air, as the  
 priest with his hyssop  
 Sprinkles the congregation, and scatters  
 blessings upon them,

68. *Kine*. Old plural of *cow*.

70. *Flagon*. A drinking vessel with a narrow neck.

*Sooth*. Truth. A. S. *soth*.

72. *The priest with his hyssop*. In Catholic churches the priest sprinkles the holy water over the people with a brush said to have been formerly made of the hyssop plant.

Down the long street she passed, with her  
chaplet of beads and her missal,  
Wearing her Norman cap, and her kirtle of  
blue, and the ear-rings, 75  
Brought in the olden time from France, and  
since, as an heirloom,  
Handed down from mother to child, through  
long generations.  
But a celestial brightness — a more ethereal  
beauty —  
Shone on her face and encircled her form,  
when, after confession,  
Homeward serenely she walked with God's  
benediction upon her. 80  
When she had passed it seemed like the  
ceasing of exquisite music.

Firmly builded with rafters of oak, the  
house of the farmer  
Stood on the side of a hill commanding the  
sea; and a shady  
Sycamore grew by the door, with a wood-  
bine wreathing around it.  
Rudely carved was the porch, with seats  
beneath; and a footpath 85

74. *Missal*. The book containing the Catholic service, printed in Latin.

78 *Ethereal*. Formed of air or ether, spirit-like, heavenly.



Led through an orchard wide, and disappeared in the meadow.

Under the Sycamore tree were hives overhung by a penthouse,

Such as the traveler sees in regions remote by the roadside,

Built o'er a box for the poor, or the blessed image of Mary,

Farther down, on the slope of the hill, was the well with its moss-grown

Bucket, fastened with iron, and near it a trough for the horseæ. 90

Shielding the house from storms, on the north, were the barns, and the farmyard,

There stood the broad-wheeled wains, and the antique ploughs and the harrows ;

There were the folds for the sheep ; and there, in his feathered seraglio,

Strutted the lordly turkey, and crowed the cock, with the self-same

Voice that in ages of old had startled the penitent Peter. 95

87. *Penthouse.* A shed sloping from a wall. A lean-to, annex.

89. *Built o'er a box for the poor.* In some Catholic countries images of the Virgin Mary, or a crucifix, or a box to receive the alms of pious travelers, are often seen by the wayside.

93. *Wain.* A wagon.

94. *Seraglio* (pron. sê-ral'-yô). The palace of a sultan or eastern prince.

Bursting with hay were the barns, themselves  
 a village. In each one  
 Far o'er the gable projected a roof of thatch ;  
 and a staircase,  
 Under the sheltering eaves, led up to the  
 odorous corn-loft.  
 There too the dove-cot stood, with its meek  
 and innocent inmates 100  
 Murmuring ever of love ; while above in the  
 variant breezes  
 Numberless noisy weathercocks rattled and  
 sang of mutation.

Thus, at peace with God and the world,  
 the farmer of Grand Pré  
 Lived on his sunny farm, and Evangeline  
 governed his household.  
 Many a youth, as he knelt in the church and  
 opened his missal, 105  
 Fixed his eyes upon her as the saint of his  
 deepest devotion ;  
 Happy was he who might touch her hand or  
 the hem of her garment !  
 Many a suitor came to her door, by the dark-  
 ness befriended,

101. *Variant.* Changeful, varying.

102 *Mutation.* Change.

*Weathercocks.* Vanes.





OLD WELL AND SITE OF CHAPEL AND PRIEST'S DWELLING, GRAND PRÉ

And, as he knocked and waited to hear the  
    sound of her footsteps,  
Knew not which beat the louder, his heart or  
    the knocker of iron ;  
Or at the joyous feast of the Patron Saint<sup>110</sup>  
    of the village,  
Bolder grew, and pressed her hand in the  
    dance as he whispered  
Hurried words of love, that seemed a part  
    of the music.  
But, among all who came, young Gabriel  
    only was welcome ;  
Gabriel Lajeunesse, the son of Basil the  
    blacksmith,  
Who was a mighty man in the village, and<sup>115</sup>  
    honored of all men ;  
For, since the birth of time, throughout all  
    ages and nations,  
Has the craft of the smith been held in repute  
    by the people.  
Basil was Benedict's friend. Their children  
    from earliest childhood  
Grew up together as brother and sister ; and  
    Father Felician,  
Priest and pedagogue both in the village, had<sup>120</sup>  
    taught them their letters

121. *Pedagogue* Schoolmaster.

Out of the self-same book, with the hymns of  
the church and the plain-song.

But when the hymn was sung, and the daily  
lesson completed,

Swiftly they hurried away to the forge of  
Basil the blacksmith.

There at the door they stood, with wonder-  
ing eyes to behold him 125

Take in his leathern lap the hoof of the horse  
as a plaything,

Nailing the shoe in its place ; while near him  
the tire of the cart-wheel

Lay like a fiery snake, coiled around in a  
circle of cinders.

Oft on autumnal eves, when without in the  
gathering darkness

Lurking with light seemed the smithy,  
through every cranny and crevice, 130

Warm by the forge within they watched the  
laboring bellows,

And as its panting ceased, and the sparks  
expired in the ashes,

Merrily laughed and said they were nuns  
going into the chapel.

Oft on sledges in winter, as swift as the  
swoop of the eagle,

122. *Plain-song.* In the Catholic Church, music of the simplest kind.  
the tones being of equal length.



Down the hillside bounding, they glided  
away o'er the meadow. 135

Oft in the barns they climbed to the popu-  
lous nests on the rafters,

Seeking with eager eyes that wondrous stone,  
which the swallow

Brings from the shore of the sea to restore  
the sight of its fledglings ;

Lucky was he who found that stone in the  
nest of the swallow !

Thus passed a few swift years and they no  
longer were children, 140

He was a valiant youth, and his face, like  
the face of the morning,

Gladdened the earth with its light, and  
ripened thought into action.

She was a woman now, with the heart and  
hopes of a woman.

"Sunshine of Saint Eulalie" was she called ;  
for that was the sunshine

Which, as the farmers believed, would load  
their orchards with apples ; 145

She, too, would bring to her husband's house  
delight and abundance,

Filling it full of love and the ruddy faces of  
children.

144. *Saint Eulalie*. A female martyr of the early church; the Norman saying was that "if the sun shone on St. Eulalie's day (Feb. 12) there will be apples and cider in plenty."

## II.

Now had the season returned, when the  
nights grow colder and longer,  
And the retreating sun the sign of the Scor-  
pion enters.

Birds of passage sailed through the leaden  
air from the ice-bound,

150

Desolate northern bays to the shores of  
tropical islands.

Harvests were gathered in; and wild with  
the winds of September

Wrestled the trees of the forest, as Jacob of  
old with the angel.

All the signs foretold a winter long and  
inclement.

Bees, with prophetic instinct of want, had  
hoarded their honey

155

Till the hives overflowed; and the Indian  
hunters asserted

Cold would the winter be, for thick was the  
fur of the foxes.

Such was the advent of autumn. Then fol-  
lowed that beautiful season,

149. *Scorpion*. The eighth constellation of the zodiac, or belt in the heavens through which the sun passes in its apparent annual course.

158. *Beautiful season*. Indian summer.

Called by the pious Acadian peasants the  
Summer of All-Saints !

Filled was the air with a dreamy and magical  
light ; and the landscape

Lay as if new created in all the freshness of  
childhood. 160

Peace seemed to reign upon earth, and the  
restless heart of the ocean

Was for a moment consoled. All sounds  
were in harmony blended.

Voices of children at play, the crowing of  
cocks in the farm-yards,

Whir of wings in the drowsy air, and the  
cooing of pigeons, 165

All were subdued and low as the murmurs  
of love, and the great sun

Looked with the eye of love through the  
golden vapors around him ;

While arrayed in its robes of russet and  
scarlet and yellow,

Bright with the sheen of the dew, each glit-  
tering tree of the forest

Flashed like the plane-tree the Persian  
adorned with mantles and jewels. 170

159. *All-Saints*. A church-feast held in honor of all the saints and angels on the 1st of November.

170. A beautiful plane-tree which the Persian King Xerxes admired so much that he decked it with mantles and jewels.

Now recommenced the reign of rest and  
affection and stillness.  
Day with its burden and heat had departed,  
and twilight descending  
Brought back the evening star to the sky,  
and the herds to the homestead.  
Pawing the ground they came, and resting  
their necks on each other,  
And with their nostrils distended inhaling  
the freshness of evening. 175  
Foremost, bearing the bell, Evangeline's  
beautiful heifer,  
Proud of her snow-white hide, and the ribbon  
that waved from her collar,  
Quietly paced and slow, as if conscious of  
human affection.  
Then came the shepherd back with his bleat-  
ing flocks from the seaside,  
Where was their favorite pasture. Behind  
them followed the watch-dog, 180  
Patient, full of importance, and grand in the  
pride of his instinct,  
Walking from side to side with a lordly air,  
and superbly  
Waving his bushy tail, and urging forward  
the stragglers ;

Regent of flocks was he when the shepherd  
slept; their protector,  
When from the forest at night, through the  
starry silence, the wolves howled. 185  
Late, with the rising moon, returned the  
wains from the marshes,  
Laden with briny hay, that filled the air with  
its odor,  
Cheerily neighed the steeds, with dew on  
their manes and their fetlocks,  
While aloft on their shoulders the wooden  
and ponderous saddles,  
Painted with brilliant dyes, and adorned with  
tassels of crimson, 190  
Nodded in bright array, like hollyhocks  
heavy with blossoms.  
Patiently stood the cows meanwhile, and  
yielded their udders  
Unto the milkmaid's hand; whilst loud and  
in regular cadence  
Into the sounding pails the foaming stream-  
lets descended.

184. *Regent*. Ruler, governor.

188. *Fetlock*. A tuft of hair behind a horse's foot, also the part where this hair grows.

191. *Hollyhock*. A common garden plant with richly colored single and double flowers. There are many varieties of it.

192. *Udder*. The milk-bag of the cow.

Lowling of cattle and peals of laughter were  
heard in the farm-yard,

195

Echoed back by the barns. Anon they sank  
into stillness ;

Heavily closed, with a jarring sound, the  
valves of the barn-doors,

Rattled the wooden bars, and all for a season  
was silent.

Indoors, warm by the wide-mouthed fire-  
place, idly the farmer

Sat in his elbow-chair, and watched how the  
flames and the smoke-wreaths

200

Struggled together like foes in a burning city.  
Behind him,

Nodding and mocking along the wall, with  
gestures fantastic,

Darted his own huge shadow, and vanished  
away into darkness.

Faces, clumsily carved in oak, on the back  
of his arm-chair

Laughed in the flickering light, and the pewter  
plates on the dresser

205

Caught and reflected the flame, as shields of  
armies the sunshine.

Fragments of song the old man sang, and  
carols of Christmas,

Such as at home, in the olden time, his  
fathers before him

Sang in their Norman orchards and bright  
Burgundian vineyards.

Close at her father's side was the gentle  
Evangeline seated,

Spinning flax for the loom, that stood in the <sup>210</sup>  
corner behind her.

Silent awhile were its treadles, at rest was  
its diligent shuttle,

While the monotonous drone of the wheel,  
like the drone of a bagpipe,

Followed the old man's song, and united the  
fragments together.

As in a church when the chant of the choir  
at intervals ceases,

Footfalls are heard in the aisles, or words of <sup>215</sup>  
the priest at the altar,

So, in each pause of the song, with measured  
motion the clock clicked.

Thus as they sat, there were footsteps  
heard, and, suddenly lifted,  
Sounded the wooden latch, and the door  
swung back on its hinges.

216. *Aisle.* The wing or side of a church.



Benedict knew by the hob-nailed shoes it  
was Basil the blacksmith,

220

And by her beating heart Evangeline knew  
who was with him.

"Welcome!" the farmer exclaimed as their  
footsteps paused on the threshold,

"Welcome, Basil, my friend! Come, take  
thy place on the settle

Close by the chimney-side, which is always  
empty without thee;

Take from the shelf overhead thy pipe and  
the box of tobacco;

225

Never so much thyself art thou as when,  
through the curling

Smoke of the pipe or the forge, thy friendly  
and jovial face gleams

Round and red as the harvest moon through  
the mist of the marshes."

Then, with a smile of content, thus answered  
Basil the blacksmith,

Taking with easy air the accustomed seat by  
the fireside:—

230

"Benedict Bellefontaine, thou hast ever thy  
jest and thy ballad!

Ever in cheerfullest mood art thou, when  
others are filled with

Gloomy forebodings of ill, and see only ruin  
before them

Happy art thou, as if every day thou hadst  
picked up a horseshoe."

Pausing a moment to take the pipe that  
Evangeline brought him,

And, with a coal from the embers had lighted,  
he slowly continued :—

" Four days now are passed since the English  
ships at their anchors

Ride in the Gaspereau's mouth, with their  
cannon pointed against us.

What their design may be is unknown ; but  
all are commanded

On the morrow to meet in the church, where  
his Majesty's mandate

Will be proclaimed as law in the land. Alas !  
in the mean time

Many surmises of evil alarm the hearts of the  
people."

Then made answer the farmer :—" Perhaps  
some friendlier purpose

Brings these ships to our shores. Perhaps  
the harvests in England

By untimely rains or untimelier heat have  
been blighted,

234. *Horse-shoe.* In old times it was counted lucky to find a horse-shoe, and even at the present day one is sometimes nailed over a doorway to keep evil from the dwelling.

238. *Gaspereau.* A river in Acadia.

240. *Mandate.* A command.

And from our bursting barns they would feed  
their cattle and children."

"Not so thinketh the folk in the village,"  
said, warmly, the blacksmith,  
Shaking his head, as in doubt; then, heaving  
a sigh, he continued: —

"Louisburg is not forgotten, nor Beau Séjour,  
nor Port Royal.

Many already have fled to the forest, and lurk  
on its outskirts,

250

Waiting with anxious hearts the dubious fate  
of to-morrow.

Arms have been taken from us, and warlike  
weapons of all kinds;

Nothing is left but the blacksmith's sledge  
and the scythe of the mower."

Then with a pleasant smile made answer the  
jovial farmer: —

"Safer are we unarmed, in the midst of our  
flocks and our cornfields,

255

Safer within these peaceful dikes, besieged  
by the ocean,

Than our fathers in forts, besieged by the  
enemy's cannon.

249. *Louisburg is not forgotten*, etc. Louisburg, a place in the island of Cape Breton, was attacked and taken by the English in 1745. The fort Beau Séjour was bombarded and reduced in 1749, and Port Royal was taken in the same year. The latter place is now called Annapolis, in honor of Queen Anne.

253. *Sledge*. A large heavy hammer.

Fear no evil, my friend, and to-night may  
no shadow of sorrow  
Fall on this house and hearth; for this is the  
night of the contract.  
Built are the house and the barn. The merry  
lads of the village 260  
Strongly have built them and well; and,  
breaking the glebe round about them,  
Filled the barn with hay, and the house with  
food for a twelvemonth.  
René Leblanc will be here anon, with his  
papers and inkhorn.  
Shall we not then be glad, and rejoice in the  
joy of our children?"  
As apart by the window she stood, with her  
hand in her lover's, 265  
Blushing Evangeline heard the words that  
her father had spoken,  
And as they died on his lips, the worthy  
notary entered.

259. *The night of the contract.* The night when the agreement of marriage between Gabriel and Evangeline was to be signed. In ancient times this was an occasion of great importance and festive rejoicing.

261. *Glebe.* Soil, ground.

263. *Inkhorn.* An ink-holder, formerly made of horn.

267. *Notary.* One who attests contracts or deeds, a notary public.

### III.

Bent like a laboring oar, that toils in the  
surf of the ocean,  
Bent, but not broken, by age was the form  
of the notary public ;  
Shocks of yellow hair, like the silken floss of  
the maize, hung 270  
Over his shoulders ; his forehead was high  
and glasses with horn bows  
Sat astride on his nose, with a look of wisdom  
supernal.  
Father of twenty children was he, and more  
than a hundred  
Children's children rode on his knee, and  
heard his great watch tick.  
Four long years in the times of the war had  
he languished a captive, 275  
Suffering much in an old French fort as the  
friend of the English.

268. *Surf*. Swell of the sea breaking on the shore or on rocks.

270. *Silken floss of the maize*. In allusion to the fine silk-like threads which hang from the maize or Indian corn.

272. *Supernal*. Above, or in a higher region.

275. *Languish*. To become feeble, to fade, to be weary. *L. languere* to be weak.

Now, though warier grown, without all guile  
 or suspicion,  
 Ripe in wisdom was he, but patient, and  
 simple, and childlike,  
 He was beloved by all, and most of all by the  
 children ;  
 For he told them tales of the Loup-garou in  
 the forest, 280  
 And of the goblin that came in the night to  
 water the horses,  
 And of the white Létitche, the ghost of a  
 child who unchristened  
 Died, and was doomed to haunt unseen the  
 chambers of children ;  
 And how on Christmas eve the oxen talked  
 in the stable,  
 And how the fever was cured by a spider  
 shut up in a nutshell, 285  
 And of the marvellous powers of four-leaved  
 clover and horseshoes,  
 With whatsoever else was writ in the lore of  
 the village.

277. *Wariet.* Comp. of *wary*, cautious, prudent.  
*Guile.* Cunning, deceit. Fr. *guile*.

280. *Loup-garou.* Lit. man-wolf. A human being changed into  
 wolf and greedy for human flesh. In this and the following seven lines  
 allusion is made to traditional and fairy stories known at that time in  
 Acadia.

281. *Goblin.* An evil spirit, a fairy.

287. *Lore.* Learning, store of knowledge.

Then up rose from his seat by the fireside  
Basil the blacksmith,

Knocked from his pipe the ashes, and slowly  
extended his right hand,

"Father Leblanc," he exclaimed, "thou hast  
heard the talk in the village," 290

And, perchance, canst tell us some news of  
these ships and their errand,"

Then with modest demeanor made answer the  
notary public,—

"Gossip enough have I heard, in sooth, yet  
am never the wiser ;

And what their errand may be I know not  
better than others,

Yet am I not of those who imagine some evil  
intention 295

Brings them here, for we are at peace ; and  
why then molest us ?"

"God's name !" shouted the hasty and some-  
what irascible blacksmith ;

"Must we in all things look for the how, and  
the why, and the wherefore ?

Daily injustice is done, and might is the right  
of the strongest !"

But without heeding his warmth, continued  
the notary public,— 300

"Man is unjust, but God is just ; and finally  
justice







MOUTH OF GASPÉ RIVER, GRAND PRÉ, (WHERE ACADIANS EMBARKED)

Triumphs: and well I remember a story,  
that often consoled me,

When as a captive I lay in the old French  
fort at Port Royal."

This was the old man's favorite tale, and he  
loved to repeat it

When his neighbors complained that any  
injustice was done them.

305

"Once in an ancient city, whose name I no  
longer remember,

Raised aloft on a column, a brazen statue of  
Justice

Stood in the public square, upholding the  
scales in its left hand,

And in its right a sword, as an emblem that  
justice presided

Over the laws of the land, and the hearts and  
homes of the people.

310

Even the birds had built their nests in the  
scales of the balance,

Having no fear of the sword that flashed in  
the sunshine above them.

But in the course of time the laws of the land  
were corrupted;

Might took the place of right, and the weak  
were oppressed, and the mighty

Ruled with an iron rod. Then it chanced in  
a nobleman's palace

315

That a necklace of pearls was lost, and ere  
long a suspicion

Fell on an orphan girl who lived as maid in  
the household.

She, after form of trial condemned to die on  
the scaffold,

Patiently met her doom at the foot of the  
statue of Justice.

As to her Father in heaven her innocent  
spirit ascended,

320

Lo ! o'er the city a tempest rose ; and the  
bolts of the thunder

Smote the statue of bronze, and hurled in  
wrath from its left hand

Down on the pavement below the clattering  
scales of the balance,

And in the hollow thereof was found the nest  
of a magpie,

Into whose clay-built walls the necklace of  
pearls was inwoven."

325

Silenced, but not convinced, when the story  
was ended, the blacksmith

Stood like a man who fain would speak, but  
findeth no language ;

319. *Justice*. Justice is represented as a blindfolded female standing with a sword in one hand and a pair of scales in the other. *L. justitia*, from *jus*, right, law.

321. *Bolt of thunder*. Stream of lightning ; so named from its darting like a bolt or arrow. Jupiter, the god of thunder, is represented with thunder-bolts in his hand.

All his thoughts were congealed into lines on  
his face, as the vapors  
Freeze in fantastic shapes on the window-  
panes in the winter.

Then Evangeline lighted the brazen lamp  
on the table, 330  
Filled, till it overflowed, the pewter tankard  
with home-brewed  
Nut-brown ale, that was famed for its strength  
in the village of Grand-Pré ;  
While from his pocket the notary drew his  
papers and inkhorn,  
Wrote with a steady hand the date and the  
age of the parties,  
Naming the dower of the bride in flocks of  
sheep and in cattle. 335  
Orderly all things proceeded, and duly and  
well were completed,  
And the great seal of the law was set like a  
sun on the margin.  
Then from his leathern pouch the farmer  
threw on the table

335. *Dower.* Marriage-portion.

337. *Seal.* The impressed wax attached to public or legal writings, in proof of their being completed, also the stamp by which the impression is made.

Three times the old man's fee in solid pieces  
of silver ;

And the notary rising, and blessing the bride  
and the bridegroom,

340

Lifted aloft the tankard of ale and drank to  
their welfare.

Wiping the foam from his lip he solemnly  
bowed and departed.

While in silence the others sat and mused by  
the fireside,

Till Evangeline brought the draught-board  
out of its corner.

Soon was the game begun. In friendly con-  
tention the old men

345

Laughed at each lucky hit, or unsuccessful  
manœuvre,

Laughed when a man was crowned, or a  
breach was made in the king-row,

Meanwhile apart, in the twilight gloom of a  
window's embrasure,

Sat the lovers, and whispered together,  
beholding the moon rise

Over the pallid sea and the silvery mist of  
the meadows.

350

346. *Manœuvre*. Lit. hand-work, skilful management.

348. *Embrasure*. The wide opening of a wall inside where a window or door is placed; an opening in a wall for cannon.

Silently one by one, in the infinite meadows  
of heaven,  
Blossomed the lovely stars, the forget-me-  
nots of the angels.

Thus was the evening passed. Anon the  
bell from the belfry  
Rang out the hour of nine, the village curfew,  
and straightway  
Rose the guests and departed; and silence  
reigned in the household. 355  
Many a farewell word and sweet good-night  
on the door-step  
Lingered long in Evangeline's heart, and  
filled it with gladness.  
Carefully then were covered the embers that  
glowed on the hearthstone,  
And on the oaken stairs resounded the tread  
of the farmer,  
Soon with a soundless step the foot of Evan-  
geline followed. 360  
Up the staircase moved a luminous space in  
the darkness,  
Lighted less by the lamp than the shining  
face of the maiden.

354. *Curfew*. Anc. the hour for putting out the house-fire and retiring to rest. Fr. *couvre feu*, cover fire.



Silent she passed the hall, and entered the  
door of her chamber.

Simple that chamber was, with its curtains  
of white, and its clothes-press

Ample and high, on whose spacious shelves  
were carefully folded

365

Linens and woollen stuffs, by the hand of  
Evangeline woven.

This was the precious dower she would bring  
to her husband in marriage,

Better than flocks and herds, being proofs of  
her skill as a housewife.

Soon she extinguished her lamp, for the mel-  
low and radiant moonlight

Streamed through the windows, and lighted  
the room, till the heart of the maiden

370

Swelled and obeyed its power, like the tremu-  
lous tides of the ocean.

Ah! she was fair, exceedingly fair to behold,  
as she stood with

Naked snow-white feet on the gleaming floor  
of her chamber!

Little she dreamed that below, among the  
trees of the orchard,

Waited her lover and watched for the gleam  
of her lamp and her shadow.

375

Yet were her thoughts of him, and at times a  
feeling of sadness

Passed o'er her soul, as the sailing shade of  
clouds in the moonlight,  
Flitted across the floor and darkened the room  
for a moment.

And, as she gazed from the window, she saw  
serenely the moon pass

Forth from the folds of a cloud, and one star  
follow her footsteps,

386

As out of Abraham's tent young Ishmael wan-  
dered with Hagar !

#### IV.

Pleasantly rose next morn the sun on the  
village of Grand-Pré.  
Pleasantly gleamed in the soft, sweet air the  
Basin of Minas,  
Where the ships, with their wavering shadows,  
were riding at anchor.  
Life had long been astir in the village, and  
clamorous labor  
Knocked with its hundred hands at the golden  
gates of the morning.  
Now from the country around, from the farms  
and neighboring hamlets,  
Came in their holiday dresses, the blithe  
Acadian peasants;  
Many a glad good-morrow and jocund laugh  
from the young folk  
Made the bright air brighter, as up from the  
numerous meadows,  
Where no path could be seen but the track  
of wheels in the greensward,  
Group after group appeared, and joined, or  
passed on the highway.

387. *Hamlet*. A small village, a few houses collected together.





GRAND PRÉ

Long ere noon, in the village all sounds of  
labor were silenced.

Thronged were the streets with people ; and  
noisy groups at the house-doors

Sat in the cheerful sun, and rejoiced and  
gossiped together. 395

Every house was an inn, where all were  
welcomed and feasted ;

For with this simple people, who lived like  
brothers together,

All things were held in common, and what  
one had was another's.

Yet under Benedict's roof hospitality seemed  
more abundant :

For Evangeline stood among the guests of  
her father ; 400

Bright was her face with smiles, and words  
of welcome and gladness

Fell from her beautiful lips, and blessed the  
cup as she gave it.

Under the open sky, in the odorous air of  
the orchard,

Stript of its golden fruit, was spread the  
feast of betrothal.

404. *Betrothal*. The engagement between two persons for a future marriage. *Be*, and *troth*, truth.

There in the shade of the porch were the  
priest and the notary seated ; 405

There good Benedict sat, and sturdy Basil  
the blacksmith.

Not far withdrawn from these, by the cider-  
press and the bee-hives,

Michael the fiddler was placed, with the  
gayest of hearts and of waist-coats.

Shadow and light from the leaves alternately  
played on his snow-white

Hair, as it waved in the wind ; and the jolly  
face of the fiddler 410

Glowed like a living coal when the ashes are  
blown from the embers.

Gaily the old man sang to the vibrant sound  
of his fiddle,

*Tous les Bourgeois de Chartres*, and *Le*  
*Carillon de Dunkerque*,

And anon with his wooden shoes beat time to  
the music.

Merrily, merrily whirled the wheels of the  
dizzying dances 415

Under the orchard trees and down the path  
to the meadows ;

413. *Tous les*, etc. "All the Good Folks of Chartres" and "The  
Vivines of Dunkirk," the names of two old French airs.

414. *Anon*. Immediately, at once.



Old folk and young together, and children  
mingled among them.

Fairest of all the maids was Evangeline,  
Benedict's daughter !

Noblest of all the youths was Gabriel, son of  
the blacksmith !

So passed the morning away. And lo !  
with a summons sonorous 420

Sounded the bell from its tower, and over  
the meadows a drum beat.

Thronged ere long was the church with men.

Without, in the churchyard,  
Waited the women. They stood by the  
graves and hung on the headstones

Garlands of autumn-leaves and evergreens  
fresh from the forest.

Then came the guard from the ships, and  
marching proudly among them 425

Entered the sacred portal. With loud and  
dissonant clangor

420. *Sonorous*. Loud-sounding. *L. sonus*, sound.

424. *Garlands*. Crowns or wreaths, composed generally of leaves or flowers.

426. *Portal*. A gate, door. *L. porta*.

*Dissonant*. Not agreeing in sound, not harmonious. *L. dissonant*, and *sono*, to sound.

*Clangor*. A sharp, harsh sound. *L. clangor*, the sound of a trumpet.

Echoed the sound of their brazen drums  
from ceiling and casement,—  
Echoed a moment only, and slowly the  
ponderous portal  
Closed, and in silence the crowd awaited the  
will of the soldiers.  
Then uprose their commander, and spake  
from the steps of the altar, 430  
Holding aloft in his hands, with its seals, the  
royal commission.  
“You are convened this day,” he said, “by  
his Majesty’s orders.  
Clement and kind has he been; but how  
have you answered his kindness,  
Let your own hearts reply! To my natural  
make and my temper  
Painful the task is I do, which to you I  
know must be grievous. 435  
Yet must I bow and obey, and deliver the  
will of our monarch;  
Namely, that all your lands, and dwellings,  
and cattle of all kinds,  
Forfeited be to the crown; and that you  
yourselves from this province

427. *Casement*. The case or frame of a window.

428. *Ponderous*. Heavy. *L. pondus, ponderis*, a weight.

431. *Commission*. A writing giving one authority to do something.

Be transported to other lands. God grant  
that you may dwell there  
Ever as faithful subjects, a happy and peace-  
able people ! 440

Prisoners now I declare you ; for such is his  
Majesty's pleasure ! ”

As, when the air is serene in the sultry  
solstice of summer,

Suddenly gathers a storm, and the deadly  
sling of the hailstones

Beats down the farmer's corn in the fields  
and shatters his windows,

Hiding the sun, and strewing the ground  
with thatch from the house-roofs, 445

Bellowing fly the herds, and seek to break  
their inclosures ;

So on the hearts of the people descended the  
words of the speaker.

Silent a moment they stood in speechless  
wonder, and then rose

Louder and ever louder a wail of sorrow and  
anger,

And, by one impulse moved, they madly  
rushed to the doorway. 450

Vain was the hope of escape ; and cries and  
fierce imprecations

442. *Solstice*. The time in mid-summer and mid-winter when the sun seems to stand still, or when it arrives at the point farthest north or south of the equator. L. *sol*, the sun, and *sisto*, to make to stand.

Rang through the house of prayer ; and high  
 o'er the heads of the others  
 Rose, with his arms uplifted, the figure of  
 Basil the blacksmith,  
 As, on a stormy sea, a spar is tossed by the  
 billows.  
 Flushed was his face and distorted with  
 passion ; and wildly he shouted,— <sup>455</sup>  
 "Down with the tyrants of England ! we  
 never have sworn them allegiance !  
 Death to these foreign soldiers, who seize on  
 our homes and our harvests !"  
 More he fain would have said, but the  
 merciless hand of a soldier  
 Smote him upon the mouth, and dragged  
 him down to the pavement.

In the midst of the strife and tumult of  
 angry contention, <sup>460</sup>  
 Lo ! the door of the chancel opened, and  
 Father Felician  
 Entered, with serious mien, and ascended the  
 steps of the altar.

456. *Allegiance.* The bond between a subject and his king; to bind.

461. *Chancel.* The part of a church in front of the altar, formerly inclosed by cross-bars or lattice work; now with rails.

462. *Mien.* Appearance of the face, look, air, manner

Raising his reverend hand, with a gesture he  
awed into silence

All that clamorous throng ; and thus he spake  
to his people ;

Deep were his tones and solemn ; in accents  
measured and mournful 465

Spake he, as, after the tocsin's alarum, dis-  
tinctly the clock strikes.

“ What is this that ye do, my children?  
what madness has seized you ?

Forty years of my life have I labored among  
you, and taught you,

Not in word alone, but in deed, to love one  
another !

Is this the fruit of my toils, of my vigils and  
prayers and privations ? 470

Have you so soon forgotten all lessons of  
love and forgiveness ?

This is the house of the Prince of Peace, and  
would you profane it

Thus with violent deeds and hearts overflow-  
ing with hatred ?

Lo ! where the crucified Christ from his cross  
is gazing upon you !

466. *Tocsin's alarum*. The alarm or warning sound given by the bell of a clock before it strikes the hour. *Tocsin*, a warning bell.

470. *Vigils*. Watchings, fastings and religious services during the night.

See ! in those sorrowful eyes what meekness  
and holy compassion ! 475

Hark ! how those lips still repeat the prayer,  
' O Father, forgive them ! '

Let us repeat that prayer in the hour when  
the wicked assail us,

Let us repeat it now, ' O Father forgive  
them ! '

Few were his words of rebuke, but deep in  
the hearts of his people

Sank they, and sobs of contrition succeeded  
the passionate outbreak, 480

While they repeated his prayer, and said " O  
Father, forgive them ! "

Then came the evening service. The  
tapers gleamed from the altar.

Fervent and deep was the voice of the priest,  
and the people responded,

Not with their lips alone, but their hearts ;  
and the Ave Maria

Sang they, and fell on their knees, and their  
souls with devotion translated, 485

Rose on the ardor of prayer, like Elijah  
ascending to heaven.

484. *Ave Maria*. The first two words of the invocation " Hail-Mary, "

485. *Translated*. Lit. carried over, carried out of themselves.







OLD FRENCH ORCHARD AND BATTLEFIELD, GRAND PRE /

Meanwhile had spread in the village the  
tidings of ill, and on all sides  
Wandered, wailing, from house to house the  
women and children.  
Long at her father's door Evangeline stood,  
with her right hand  
Shielding her eyes from the level rays of the  
sun, that, descending, <sup>490</sup>  
Lighted the village street with mysterious  
splendor, and roofed each  
Peasant's cottage with golden thatch, and  
emblazoned its windows.  
Long within had been spread the snow-white  
cloth on the table ;  
There stood the wheaten loaf, and the honey  
fragrant with wild-flowers ;  
There stood the tankard of ale, and the  
cheese fresh brought from the dairy ; <sup>495</sup>  
And, at the head of the board, the great arm-  
chair of the farmer.  
Thus did Evangeline wait at her father's  
door, as the sunset  
Threw the long shadows of trees o'er the  
broad ambrosial meadows.

492. *Emblazoned*. Decked in bright, flaming colors. From *blaze*, a flame.

498. *Ambrosial*. Pleasant to the taste or smell, delightful.

Ah! on her spirit within a deeper shadow  
had fallen,  
And from the fields of her soul a fragrance  
celestial ascended,—500  
Charity, meekness, love, and hope, and for-  
giveness, and patience!  
Then, all-forgetful of self, she wandered into  
the village,  
Cheering with looks and words the mournful  
hearts of the women,  
As over the darkening fields with lingering  
steps they departed,  
Urged by their household cares, and the  
weary feet of their children.505  
Down sank the great red sun, and in golden  
glimmering vapors  
Veiled the light of his face, like the prophet  
descending from Sinai;  
Sweetly over the village the bell of the  
Angelus sounded.

Meanwhile, amid the gloom by the church  
Evangeline lingered.

All was silent within; and in vain at the  
doors and the windows510  
Stood she, and listened and looked, till,  
overcome by emotion,

"Gabriel!" cried she aloud with tremulous  
voice ; but no answer  
Came from the graves of the dead, nor the  
gloomier grave of the living.  
Slowly at length she returned to the tenant-  
less house of her father.  
Smouldered the fire on the hearth, on the  
board was the supper untasted, 515  
Empty and drear was each room, and haunted  
with phantoms of terror  
Sadly echoed her step on the stair and the  
floor of her chamber.  
In the dead of the night she heard the dis-  
consolate rain fall  
Loud on the withered leaves of the sycamore-  
tree by the window,  
Keenly the lightning flashed ; and the voice  
of the echoing thunder 520  
Told her that God was in heaven, and gov-  
erned the world he created !  
Then she remembered the tale she had heard  
of the justice of Heaven ;  
Soothed was her troubled soul, and she  
peacefully slumbered till morning.

513. *Gloomier grave of the living.* The church in which the men were  
shut up.

V.

Four times the sun has arisen and set ;  
and now on the fifth day  
Cheerily called the cock to the sleeping  
maids of the farmhouse. 525  
Soon o'er the yellow fields, in silent and  
mournful procession,  
Came from the neighboring hamlets and  
farms the Acadian women,  
Driving in ponderous wains their household  
goods to the seashore,  
Pausing and looking back to gaze once more  
on their dwellings,  
Ere they were shut from sight by the wind-  
ing road and the woodland. 530  
Close at their sides their children ran and  
urged on the oxen,  
While in their little hands they clasped some  
fragments of playthings.

Thus to the Gaspereau's mouth they hur-  
ried ; and there on the sea-beach,  
Piled in confusion, lay the household goods  
of the peasants.

534. *Peasants.* Dwellers in villages, country people.

All day long between the shore and the ships  
did the boats ply ; 535

All day long the wains came laboring down  
from the village.

Late in the afternoon, when the sun was near  
to his setting,

Echoed far o'er the fields came the roll of  
drums from the churchyard.

Thither the women and children thronged.  
On a sudden the church-doors

Opened, and forth came the guard, and  
marching in gloomy procession 540

Followed the long imprisoned, but patient,  
Acadian farmers.

Even as pilgrims, who journey afar from  
their homes and their country,

Sing as they go, and in singing forget they  
are weary and wayworn,

So with songs on their lips the Acadian  
peasants descended

Down from the church to the shore, amid  
their wives and their daughters. 545

Foremost the young men came ; and raising  
together their voices,

Sang with tremulous lips a chant of the  
Catholic Missions :—

“Sacred heart of the Saviour ! Oh, inex-  
haustible fountain !



Fill our hearts this day with strength and  
submission and patience ! ”

Then the old men, as they marched, and the  
women that stood by the wayside 550

Joined in the sacred psalm, and the birds in  
the sunshine above them

Mingled their notes therewith, like voices of  
spirits departed.

Half-way down to the shore Evangeline  
waited in silence,

Not overcome with grief, but strong in the  
hour of affliction,—

Calmly and sadly she waited, until the pro-  
cession approached her, 555

And she beheld the face of Gabriel pale with  
emotion.

Tears then filled her eyes, and, eagerly run-  
ning to meet him,

Clasped she his hands, and laid her head on  
his shoulder, and whispered,—

“ Gabriel ! be of good cheer ! for if we love  
one another

Nothing, in truth, can harm us, whatever  
mischances may happen ! ” 560

Smiling she spake these words ; then sud-  
denly paused, for her father



Saw she slowly advancing. Alas ! how  
changed was his aspect !  
Gone was the glow from his cheek, and the  
fire from his eye, and his footstep  
Heavier seemed with the weight of the heavy  
heart in his bosom.  
But with a smile and a sigh, she clasped his  
neck and embraced him, 565  
Speaking words of endearment where words  
of comfort availed not.  
Thus to the Gaspereau's mouth moved on  
that mournful procession.

There disorder prevailed, and the tumult  
and stir of embarking.  
Busily plied the freighted boats ; and in the  
confusion  
Wives were torn from their husbands, and  
mothers, too late, saw their children 570  
Left on the land, extending their arms in  
wildest entreaties.  
So unto separate ships were Basil and  
Gabriel carried,  
While in despair on the shore Evangeline  
stood with her father.  
Half the task was not done when the sun  
went down, and the twilight

Deepened and darkened around ; and in haste  
the refluxent ocean 575

Fled away from the shore, and left the line  
of the sand-beach

Covered with waifs of the tide, with kelp  
and the slippery sea-weed.

Farther back in the midst of the household  
goods and the wagons,

Like to a gypsy camp, or a leaguer after a  
battle,

All escape cut off by the sea and the senti-  
nels near them, 580

Lay encamped for the night the houseless  
Acadian farmers.

Back to its nethermost caves retreated the  
bellowing ocean,

Dragging adown the beach the rattling peb-  
bles, and leaving

Inland and far up the shore the stranded  
boats of the sailors.

Then, as the night descended, the herds  
returned from their pastures ; 585

575. *Refluxent.* Going back, ebbing.

577. *Waifs.* Things without an owner, as what a thief throws away when pursued ; what the tide casts on the shore.

*Kelp.* A sea-weed from which the medicine iodine is made.

579. *Leaguer.* A camp.

582. *Nethermost.* Lowest.

Sweet was the moist still air with the odor  
of milk from their udders ;  
Lowing they waited, and long, **at the well-**  
known bars of the farmyard,—  
Waited and looked in vain for the voice and  
the hand of the milkmaid.  
Silence reigned in the streets ; from the  
church no Angelus sounded,  
Rose no smoke from the roofs, and gleamed  
no lights from the windows. 590

But on the shores meanwhile the evening  
fires had been kindled,  
Built of the drift-wood thrown on the sands  
from wrecks in the tempest.  
Round them shapes of gloom and sorrowful  
faces were gathered,  
Voices of women were heard, and of men,  
and the crying of children.  
Onward from fire to fire, as from hearth to  
hearth in his parish, 595  
Wandered the faithful priest, consoling and  
blessing and cheering,  
Like unto shipwrecked Paul on Melita's  
desolate sea-shore.  
Thus he approached the place where Evan-  
geline sat with her father,

And in the flickering light beheld the face of  
the old man,

Haggard and hollow and wan, and without  
either thought or emotion, 600

E'en as the face of a clock from which the  
hands had been taken.

Vainly Evangeline strove with words and  
caresses to cheer him,

Vainly offered him food; yet he moved not,  
he looked not, he spake not,

But, with a vacant stare, ever gazed at the  
flickering fire-light.

"*Benedicite!*" murmured the priest, in tones  
of compassion. 605

More he fain would have said, but his heart  
was full, and his accents

Faltered and paused on his lips, as the feet  
of a child on a threshold,

Hushed by the scene he beholds, and the  
awful presence of sorrow.

Silently, therefore, he laid his hand on the  
head of the maiden,

Raising his tearful eyes to the silent stars  
that above them 610

600. *Wan.* Pale, sickly.

605. *Benedicite.* The first word of the Latin form of blessing.

Moved on their way, unperturbed by the  
wrongs and sorrows of mortals.  
Then sat he down at her side, and they wept  
together in silence.

Suddenly rose from the south a light, as in  
autumn the blood-red  
Moon climbs the crystal walls of heaven, and  
o'er the horizon  
Titan-like stretches its hundred hands upon  
mountain and meadow, 615  
Seizing the rocks and the rivers, and piling  
huge shadows together.  
Broader and ever broader it gleamed on the  
roofs of the village,  
Gleamed on the sky and the sea, and the  
ships that lay in the roadstead.  
Columns of shining smoke uprose, and flashes  
of flame were  
Thrust through their folds and withdrawn,  
like the quivering hands of a martyr. 620  
Then as the wind seized the gleeds and the  
burning thatch, and, uplifting,

611. *Unperturbed.* Not disturbed or disordered, unmoved.

615. *Titan-like.* The Titans were a fabled race who waged war with the gods. Briareus and his brothers, who engaged in these wars, are said to have had a hundred arms and fifty heads.

618. *Roadstead.* A place where ships can lie or ride at anchor.

621. *Gleed.* A burning coal, a fire.

Whirled them aloft through the air, at once  
from a hundred housetops  
Started the sheeted smoke with flashes of  
flame intermingled.

These things beheld in dismay the crowd  
on the shore and on shipboard.  
Speechless at first they stood, then cried  
aloud in their anguish, 625  
"We shall behold no more our homes in the  
village of Grand-Pré!"  
Loud on a sudden the cocks began to crow  
in the farmyards,  
Thinking the day had dawned; and anon the  
lowing of cattle  
Came on the evening breeze, by the barking  
of dogs interrupted.  
Then rose a sound of dread, such as startles 630  
the sleeping encampments  
Far in the western prairies or forests that  
skirt the Nebraska,  
When the wild horses affrighted sweep by  
with the speed of the whilwind,  
Or the loud bellowing herds of buffaloes rush  
to the river.



Such was the sound that arose on the night,  
as the herds and the horses  
Broke through their folds and fences, and  
madly rushed o'er the meadows. 635

Overwhelmed with the sight yet speech-  
less, the priest and the maiden  
Gazed on the scene of terror that reddened  
and widened before them ;  
And as they turned at length to speak to  
their silent companion,  
Lo ! from his seat he had fallen, and stretched  
abroad on the seashore  
Motionless lay his form, from which the soul  
had departed. 640  
Slowly the priest uplifted the lifeless head,  
and the maiden  
Knelt at her father's side, and wailed aloud  
in her terror.  
Then in a swoon she sank, and lay with her  
head on his bosom.  
Through the long night she lay in deep,  
oblivious slumber ;  
And when she woke from the trance, she  
beheld a multitude near her. 645



Faces of friends she beheld, that were  
mournfully gazing upon her,  
Pallid, with tearful eyes, and looks of sad-  
dest compassion.

Still the blaze of the burning village illumined  
the landscape,

Reddened the sky overhead, and gleamed on  
the faces around her,

And like the day of doom it seemed to her  
wavering senses. 654

Then a familiar voice she heard, as it said to  
the people,—

“Let us bury him here by the sea. When a  
happier season

Brings us again to our homes from the  
unknown land of our exile,

Then shall his sacred dust be piously laid in  
the church-yard.”

Such were the words of the priest. And  
there in haste by the sea-side, 655

Having the glare of the burning village for  
funeral torches,

But without bell or book, they buried the  
farmer of Grand-Pré.

And as the voice of the priest repeated the  
service of sorrow,

657. *Without bell or book.* Without the rites or ceremonies of the Church.

Lo ! with a mournful sound, like the voice of  
a vast congregation,  
Solemnly answered the sea, and mingled its  
roar with the dirges ; 660 .  
'Twas the returning tide, that afar from the  
waste of the ocean,  
With the first dawn of the day, came heaving  
and hurrying landward.  
Then recommenced once more the stir and  
noise of embarking ;  
And with the ebb of the tide the ships sailed  
out of the harbor,  
Leaving behind them the dead on the shore,  
and the village in ruins. 665

660. *Dirge*. A mournful song or tune. Contracted from the words beginning the funeral service in Latin, *Dirige, Domine nos*, "Direct us, O Lord."

## PART THE SECOND.

### I

Many a weary year had passed since the  
burning of Grand Pré,  
When on the falling tide the freighted vessels  
departed,  
Bearing a nation, with all its household gods,  
into exile,  
Exile without an end, and without an  
example in story.  
Far asunder, on separate coasts, the Acadians  
landed ; 670  
Scattered were they, like flakes of snow,  
when the wind from the north-east  
Strikes aslant through the fogs that darken  
the Banks of Newfoundland.  
Friendless, homeless, hopeless, they wan-  
dered from city to city,  
From the cold lakes of the North to sultry  
Southern savannahs,—

668. *Household gods.* Anc. the gods presiding over the house or family, now objects endeared to us as connected with home.

668. *Exile.* Banishment from one's native land.

672. *Newfoundland.* A large island in the Atlantic Ocean near Nova Scotia. The Banks are extensive fishing grounds off its coast, where dense fogs often prevail.

674. *Savannahs.* Prairies, vast treeless plains.

From the bleak shores of the sea to the lands  
    where the Father of Waters 675  
Seizes the hills in his hands, and drags them  
    down to the ocean,  
Deep in their sands to bury the scattered  
    bones of the mammoth.  
Friends they sought and homes; and many,  
    despairing, heart-broken,  
Asked of the earth but a grave, and no longer  
    a friend nor a fireside.  
Written their history stands on tablets of  
    stone in the church-yards. 680  
Long among them was seen a maiden who  
    waited and wandered,  
Lowly and meek in spirit, and patiently  
    suffering all things,  
Fair was she and young; but, alas! before  
    her extended,  
Dreary and vast and silent, the desert of life  
    with its pathway  
Marked by the graves of those who had sor-  
    rowed and suffered before her.  
Passions long extinguished, and hopes long  
    dead and abandoned, 685

675. *The Father of Waters*, etc. The Mississippi (meaning "Father of Waters" or "Great Waters"), the largest river of North America, above 3,000 miles in length. It has a rapid current, loaded with soil carried down from its high banks.

677. *Mammoth*. An extinct species of elephant whose bones and tusks are found embedded in the earth in some parts of the world.

As the emigrant's way o'er the Western desert is marked by

Camp-fires long consumed, and bones that bleach in the sunshine.

Something there was in her life incomplete, imperfect, unfinished ;

As if a morning of June, with all its music and sunshine, 690

Suddenly paused in the sky, and, fading, slowly descended

Into the east again, from whence it late had arisen.

Sometimes she lingered in towns, till, urged by the fever within her,

Urged by a restless longing, the hunger and thirst of the spirit,

She would commence again her endless search and endeavor ; 695

Sometimes in church-yards strayed, and gazed on the crosses and tombstones,

Sat by some nameless grave, and thought that perhaps in its bosom

He was already at rest, and she longed to slumber beside him.

Sometimes a rumor, a hearsay, an inarticulate whisper,

699. *Inarticulate.* Not distinctly spoken, low, broken, disjointed.

Came with its airy hand to point and beckon  
her forward. 700

Sometimes she spake with those who had seen  
her beloved and known him,  
But it was long ago, in some far-off place or  
forgotten.

"Gabriel Lajeunesse!" they said; "O yes!  
we have seen him.

He was with Basil the blacksmith, and both  
have gone to the prairies;  
Coureurs-des-Bois are they, and famous hunt-  
ers and trappers." 705

"Gabriel Lajeunesse!" said others; "O yes!  
we have seen him.

He is a Voyageur in the lowlands of Louisi-  
ana."

Then would they say, "Dear child! why  
dream and wait for him longer?  
Are there not other youths as fair as Gabriel?  
others

Who have hearts as tender and true, and  
spirits as loyal? 710

Here is Baptiste Leblanc, the notary's son,  
who has loved thee

705. *Coureurs-des-Bois*. Lit. runners of the woods, bushrangers, men who bought fur-skins from the native tribes.

*Trappers*. Men employed catching beavers and other wild animals in traps.

707. *Voyageur*. Lit. traveler, a river boatman.



Many a tedious year; come, give him thy  
hand and be happy!

Thou art too fair to be left to braid St.  
Catherine's tresses."

Then would Evangeline answer, serenely but  
sadly, "I cannot!

Whither my heart has gone, there follows my  
hand, and not elsewhere. 715

For when the heart goes before, like a lamp,  
and illumines the pathway,

Many things are made clear, that else lie hid-  
den in darkness."

Thereupon the priest, her friend and father-  
confessor,

Said, with a smile, "O daughter! thy God  
thus speaketh within thee!

Talk not of wasted affection, affection never  
was wasted; 720

If it enrich not the heart of another, its  
waters, returning

Back to their springs, like the rain, shall fill  
them full of refreshment;

That which the fountain sends forth returns  
again to the fountain.

713. *To braid St. Catherine's tresses.* To remain unmarried, a phrase said to be derived from the practice of unmarried women dressing the heads of the statues of St. Catherine, the patron saint of virgins.

718. *Father-confessor.* The priest to whom she confessed.



Patience ; accomplish thy labor ; accomplish  
thy work of affection !

Sorrow and silence are strong, and patient  
endurance is godlike. 725

Therefore accomplish thy labor of love, till  
the heart is made godlike.

Purified, strengthened, perfected, and ren-  
dered more worthy of heaven ! ”

Cheered by the good man's words, Evange-  
line labored and waited.

Still in her heart she had heard the funeral  
dirge of the ocean,

But with its sound there was mingled a voice  
that whispered, “ Despair not ! ” 730

Thus did that poor soul wander in want and  
cheerless discomfort,

Bleeding, barefooted, over the shards and  
thorns of existence.

Let me essay, O Muse ! to follow the wan-  
derer's footsteps ;—

Not through each devious path, each change-  
ful year of existence ;

But as a traveller follows a streamlet's course  
through the valley ; 735

732. *Shard*. A piece of a broken earthen vessel, or of any brittle substance — troubles.

733. *Essay*. To try. Fr *essayer*.

734. *Devious*. Out of the common way, rambling. L. *de*, from, and *via*, a way.

Far from its margin at times, and seeing the  
gleam of its water  
Here and there, in some open space, and at  
intervals only ;  
Then drawing nearer its banks, through syl-  
van glooms that conceal it,  
Though he behold it not, he can hear its con-  
tinuous murmur ;  
Happy, at length if he find the spot where it  
reaches an outlet. 740

736. *Gleam*. See note 373.

738. *Sylvan* (or *Silvan*). Belonging to a wood or forest, covered with trees. L. *silva*, a wood.

## II.

It was the month of May. Far down the  
Beautiful River,  
Past the Ohio shore and past the mouth of  
the Wabash,  
Into the golden stream of the broad and  
swift Mississippi,  
Floated a cumberous boat, that was rowed by  
Acadian boatmen.  
It was a band of exiles ; a raft, as it were,  
from the shipwrecked 745  
Nation, scattered along the coast, now float-  
ing together,  
Bound by the bonds of a common belief and  
a common misfortune ;  
Men and women and children, who, guided  
by hope or by hearsay,  
Sought for their kith and their kin among the  
few-acred farmers  
On the Acadian coast, and the prairies of fair  
Opelousas. 750

741. *The Beautiful River.* This is said to be the meaning of the native Indian name *Ohio*, a large river which bounds part of the state of Ohio, and falls into the Mississippi. The Wabash falls into the Ohio.

745. *Raft.* Cut timber fastened together for floating down a river, also a similar structure for saving the lives of persons ship-wrecked.

750. *Acadian coast.* Shores of the Mississippi settled by the Acadian exiles.

*Fair Opelousas.* A fertile and beautiful part of the state of Louisiana.

With them Evangeline went, and her guide,  
the Father Felician.

Onward o'er sunken sands, through a wilder-  
ness sombre with forests,

Day after day they glided adown the turbu-  
lent river ;

Night after night, by their blazing fires  
encamped on its borders.

Now through rushing chutes, among green  
islands, where plumelike 755

Cotton-trees nodded their shadowy crests,  
they swept with the current,

Then emerged into broad lagoons, where sil-  
very sand-bars

Lay in the stream, and along the wimpling  
waves of their margin,

Shining with snow-white plumies, large flocks  
of pelicans waded.

Level the landscape grew, and along the  
shores of the river, 760

Shaded by china-trees, in the midst of luxuri-  
ant gardens,

755. *Chutes*. River falls or rapids over which timber rafts are floated.

757. *Lagoons*. Shallow lakes or ponds connected with the sea or a river.

758. *Wimpling*. Folding one over the other, lapping.

759. *Pelican*. A bird larger than the swan, living on the edges of rivers and lakes, and feeding on fish.

761. *China-tree*. The soap-berry, a small beautiful tree which grows in the southern states.

Stood the houses of planters, with negro-  
cabins and dove-cots.

They were approaching the region where  
reigns perpetual summer,

Where through the Golden Coast, and groves  
of orange and citron,

Sweeps with majestic curve the river away to  
the eastward. 765

They, too, swerved from their course ; and,  
entering the Bayou of Plaquemine,

Soon were lost in a maze of sluggish and  
devious waters,

Which, like a net-work of steel, extended in  
every direction.

Over their heads the towering and tenebrous  
boughs of the cypress

Met in a dusky arch, and trailing mosses in  
mid-air, 770

Waved like banners that hang on the walls  
of ancient cathedrals.

Deathlike the silence seemed, and unbroken,  
save by the herons

764. *Golden Coast.* Rich banks of the Mississippi.

766. *Bayou.* An outlet or arm of a lake or river.

769. *Tenebrous.* Dark, gloomy.

772. *Heron.* A large water-bird, with long legs, which builds its nest  
in high trees.

Home to their roosts in the cedar-trees  
returning at sunset,  
Or by the owl, as he greeted the moon with  
demoniac laughter.  
Lovely the moonlight was as it glanced and  
gleamed on the water, 775  
Gleamed on the columns of cypress and cedar  
sustaining the arches,  
Down through whose broken vaults it fell as  
through chinks in a ruin.  
Dreamlike, and indistinct, and strange were  
all things around them;  
And o'er their spirits there came a feeling  
of wonder and sadness,—  
Strange forebodings of ill, unseen and that  
cannot be compassed. 780  
As, at the tramp of a horse's hoof on the turf  
of the prairies,  
Far in advance are closed the leaves of the  
shrinking mimosa,  
So, at the hoof-beats of fate, with sad fore-  
bodings of evil.  
Shrinks and closes the heart, ere the stroke  
of doom has attained it.

774. *Demoniac.* Like a devil or evil spirit.

777. *Vaults.* Arched or turned roofs, here the coverings formed by the tops of the high trees.

782. *Shrinking mimosa.* The sensitive plant, whose leaves shrink or fold in on being touched or shaken, as if they had the sense of feeling.

But Evangeline's heart was sustained by a  
vision, that faintly 783

Floated before her eyes, and beckoned her  
on through the moonlight.

It was the thought of her brain that assumed  
the shape of a phantom.

Through those shadowy aisles had Gabriel  
wandered before her,

And every stroke of the oar now brought  
him nearer and nearer.

'Then in his place, at the prow of the boat,  
roſe one of the oarsmen, 790

And, as a signal sound, if others like them  
peradventure

Sailed on those gloomy and midnight streams,  
blew a blast on his bugle.

Wild through the dark colonnades and cor-  
ridors leafy the blast rang,

Breaking the seal of silence, and giving  
tongues to the forest.

Soundless above them the banners of moss  
just stirred to the music ; 795

Multitudinous echoes awoke and died in the  
distance,

790. *Prow.* The fore part of a ship, the place for the look-out.

791. *Peradventure.* By chance or accident, perhaps.

792. *Bugle.* A hunting-horn.



Over the watery floor, and beneath the reverberant branches ;  
But not a voice replied ; no answer came from the darkness ;  
And, when the echoes had ceased, like a sense of pain was the silence.  
Then Evangeline slept ; but the boatmen rowed through the midnight, 800  
Silent at times, then singing familiar Canadian boat-songs,  
Such as they sang of old on their own Acadian rivers,  
While through the night was heard the mysterious sounds of the desert,  
Far off,—indistinct,—as of wave or of wind in the forest,  
Mixed with the whoop of the crane and the roar of the grim alligator. 805

Thus ere another noon they emerged from the shades ; and before them  
Lay, in the golden sun, the lakes of the Atchafalaya.

797. *Reverberant*. Lit. beating back, sending back the sound.

805. *Whoop of the crane*. The whooping-crane is a large pure white bird, with long legs fitted for wading, and a clear, piercing whoop or cry that can be heard at a distance of two miles.

807. *Atchafalaya*. A bayou or outlet of the Mississippi river.

Water-lilies in myriads rocked on the slight  
undulations

Made by the passing oars, and, resplendent  
in beauty, the lotus

Lifted her golden crown above the heads of  
the boatmen. 810

Faint was the air with the odorous breath of  
magnolia blossoms,

And with the heat of noon; and numberless  
sylvan islands,

Fragrant and thickly embowered with blos-  
soming hedges of roses,

Near to whose shores they glided along,  
invited to slumber.

Soon by the fairest of these their weary oars  
were suspended. 815

Under the boughs of Wachita willows, that  
grew by the margin,

Safely their boat was moored; and scattered  
about on the green-sward,

Tired with their midnight toil, the weary  
travellers slumbered.

Over them vast and high extended the cope  
of a cedar.

809. *Lotus*. A beautiful flower, resembling a water-lily.

816. *Wachita*. A river in Louisiana.

817. *Moored*. Tied, fastened.

819. *Cope*. Lit. a cover for the head, anything spread over the head.  
roof of a house.

Swinging from its great arms, the trumpet  
flower and the grape-vine 820  
Hung their ladder of ropes aloft like the ladder of Jacob,  
On whose pendulous stairs the angels ascending,  
descending,  
Were the swift humming birds, that flitted  
from blossom to blossom.  
Such was the vision Evangeline saw as she  
slumbered beneath it.  
Filled was her heart with love, and the dawn  
of an opening heaven 825  
Lighted her soul in sleep with the glory of  
regions celestial.

Nearer, ever nearer, among the numberless islands,  
Darted a light, swift boat, that sped away  
o'er the water,  
Urged on its course by the sinewy arms of  
hunters and trappers.  
Northward its prow was turned, to the land  
of the bison and beaver. 830

820. *Trumpet-flower.* A climbing-plant with showy orange and scarlet flowers.

822. *Pendulous.* Hanging, swinging, fastened at one end.

830. *Bison.* Buffalo.

At the helm sat a youth, with countenance  
thoughtful and careworn.  
Dark and neglected locks overshadowed his  
brow, and a sadness  
Somewhat beyond his years on his face was  
legibly written.  
Gabriel was it, who, weary with waiting,  
unhappy and restless,  
Sought in the Western wilds oblivion of self  
and of sorrow, 835  
Swiftly they glided along, close under the  
lee of the island,  
But by the opposite bank, and behind a  
screen of palmettos,  
So that they saw not the boat, where it lay  
concealed in the willows ;  
All undisturbed by the dash of their oars,  
and unseen, were the sleepers.  
Angel of God, was their none to awaken the  
slumbering maiden ! 840  
Swiftly they glided away, like the shade of a  
cloud on the prairie.  
After the sound of their oars on the tholes  
had died in the distance,

836. *Lee*. A sheltered place, here the side of the island over which the wind blew.

837. *Palmettos*. A kind of palm-tree, the cabbage-palm of the southern states. The stem grows without branches to a height of 150 feet, and is crowned by a head of large leaves.

842. *Tholes*. The pins used to keep an oar in its place.

As from a magic trance the sleepers awoke,  
and the maiden  
Said with a sigh to the friendly priest, "O  
Father Felician !  
Something says in my heart that near me  
Gabriel wanders. 845  
Is it a foolish dream, an idle and vague  
superstition?  
Or has an angel passed, and revealed the  
truth to my spirit?"  
Then, with a blush, she added, "Alas for my  
credulous fancy !  
Unto ears like thine such words as these have  
no meaning."  
But made answer the reverend man, and he  
smiled as he answered,— 850  
"Daughter, thy words are not idle ; nor are  
they to me without meaning.  
Feeling is deep and still ; and the word that  
floats on the surface  
Is as the tossing buoy, that betrays where  
the anchor is hidden.  
Therefore trust to thy heart, and to what the  
world calls illusions.  
Gabriel truly is near thee ; for not far away  
to the southward, 855

853. *Buoy.* A floating cask or piece of wood fastened over the spot where a rock or anchor lies.

On the banks of the Têche, are the towns of  
St. Maur and St. Martin.

There the long-wandering bride shall be  
given again to her bridegroom,

There the long-absent pastor regain his flock  
and his sheepfold.

Beautiful is the land, with its prairies and  
forests of fruit-trees ;

Under the feet a garden of flowers, and the  
bluest of heavens 860

Bending above, and resting its dome on the  
walls of the forest.

They who dwell there have named it the  
Eden of Louisiana."

With these words of cheer they arose and  
continued their journey.

Softly the evening came. The sun from the  
western horizon

Like a magician extended his golden wand  
o'er the landscape ; 865

Twinkling vapors arose ; and sky and water  
and forest

Seemed all on fire at the touch, and melted  
and mingled together.

856. *Têche*. (*tesh*) A bayou or river in Louisiana.



Hanging between two skies, a cloud with  
edges of silver,

Floated the boat, with its dripping oars, on  
the motionless water.

Filled was Evangeline's heart with inexpressible  
sweetness. 870

Touched by the magic spell, the sacred  
fountains of feeling

Glowed with the light of love, as the skies  
and the waters around her.

Then from a neighboring thicket the mocking  
bird, wildest of singers,

Swinging aloft on a willow spray that hung  
o'er the water,

Shook from his little throat such floods of  
delirious music, 875

That the whole air and the woods and the  
waves seemed silent to listen.

Plaintive at first were the tones and sad ; then  
soaring to madness .

Seemed they to follow or guide the revel of  
frenzied Bacchantes.

Single notes were then heard, in sorrowful,  
low lamentation ;

878. *Frenzied Bacchantes.* Those who took part in keeping the feasts of Bacchus, the god of wine and drunkards, at which there was much mad or frenzied riot and dancing.



Till, having gathered them all, he flung them  
abroad in derision, 880

As when, after a storm, a gust of wind  
through the tree-tops

Shakes down the rattling rain in a crystal  
shower on the branches.

With such a prelude as this, and hearts that  
throbbed with emotion,

Slowly they enter the Têche, where it flows  
through the green Opelousas,

And, through the amber air, above the crest  
of the woodland, 885

Saw the column of smoke that arose from a  
neighboring dwelling;—

Sounds of a horn they heard, and the distant  
lowing of cattle.

### III

Near to the bank of the river, o'er-  
shadowed by oaks, from whose branches  
Garlands of Spanish moss and of mystic  
mistletoe flaunted,  
Such as the Druids cut down with golden  
hatchets at Yule-tide, 890  
Stood, secluded and still, the house of the  
herdsman. A garden  
Girded it round about with a belt of luxuri-  
ant blossoms,  
Filling the air with fragrance. The house  
itself was of timbers  
Hewn from the cypress-tree, and carefully  
fitted together.  
Large and low was the roof; and on slender  
columns supported, 895  
Rose-wreathed, vine-encircled, a broad and  
spacious veranda,  
Haunt of the humming-bird and the bee,  
extended around it.

889. *Spanish moss*. A plant which appears like a mass of gray fibres or threads hanging down from the trees in the southern states.

889. *Mystic mistletoe*. A plant which grows on the trunk of the oak and other trees. It was held in great reverence by the ancient Celtic nations, and used in the mystic or secret religious rites of their priests, the Druids.

890. *Yule-tide*. Christmas time. A.S. *Iule*, Christmas, and *tid*, time.

At each end of the house, amid the flowers of  
the garden,

Stationed the dove-cots were, as love's per-  
petual symbol,

Scenes of endless wooing, and endless con-  
tentions of rivals. 900

Silence reigned o'er the place. The line of  
shadow and sunshine

Ran near the tops of the trees ; but the house  
itself was in shadow,

And from its chimney-top, ascending and  
slowly expanding

Into the evening air, a thin blue column of  
smoke rose.

In the rear of the house, from the garden  
gate, ran a pathway 905

Through the great groves of oak to the skirts  
of the limitless prairie,

Into whose sea of flowers the sun was slowly  
descending ;

Full in his track of light, like ships with  
shadowy canvas

Hanging loose from their spars in a motion-  
less calm in the tropics,

Stood a cluster of trees, with tangled cord-  
age of grape-vines. 910

Just where the woodlands met the flowery  
surf of the prairie,

Mounted upon his horse, with Spanish saddle  
and stirrups,

Sat a herdsman, arrayed in gaiters and doublet  
of deerskin.

Broad and brown was the face that from  
under the Spanish sombrero

Gazed on the peaceful scene, with the lordly  
look of its master. 915

Round about him were numberless herds of  
kine, that were grazing

Quietly in the meadows, and breathing the  
vapory freshness

That uprose from the river, and spread itself  
over the landscape.

Slowly lifting the horn that hung at his side,  
and expanding

Fully his broad, deep chest, he blew a blast  
that resounded 920

Wildly and sweet and far, through the still  
damp air of the evening.

Suddenly out of the grass the long white  
horns of the cattle

Rose like flakes of foam on the adverse currents  
of ocean.

913. *Doublet*. A close-fitting garment reaching to a little below the waist. From *double*, because it was originally made of two plies or double cloth for defence against blows.

914. *Sombrero*. A hat with a broad brim for shade.

Silent a moment they gazed, then bellowing  
rushed o'er the prairie,  
And the whole mass became a cloud, a shade  
in the distance. 925

Then, as the herdsman turned to the house,  
through the gate of the garden  
Saw he the forms of the priest and the  
maiden advancing to meet him.

Suddenly down from his horse he sprang in  
amazement, and forward

Rushed with extended arms and exclamations  
of wonder ;

When they beheld his face, they recognized  
Basil the blacksmith, 930

Hearty his welcome was, as he led his guests  
to the garden.

There in an arbor of roses with endless ques-  
tion and answer

Gave they vent to their hearts, and renewed  
their friendly embraces,

Laughing and weeping by turns, or sitting  
silent and thoughtful. 935

Thoughtful, for Gabriel came not ; and now  
dark doubts and misgivings

Stole o'er the maiden's heart ; and Basil,  
somewhat embarrassed,

Broke the silence and said, " If you came by  
the Atchafalaya,

How have you nowhere encountered my  
Gabriel's boat on the bayous?"

Over Evangeline's face at the words of Basil  
a shade passed.

Tears came into her eyes, and she said with  
a tremulous accent, 940

"Gone? is Gabriel gone?" and, concealing  
her face on his shoulder,

All her o'erburdened heart gave way, and  
she wept and lamented.

Then the good Basil said,—and his voice  
grew blithe as he said it,—

"Be of good cheer, my child; it is only  
to-day that he departed.

Foolish boy! he has left me alone with my  
herds and my horses. 945

Moody and restless grown, and tried and  
troubled, his spirit

Could no longer endure the calm of this  
quiet existence.

Thinking ever of thee, uncertain and sorrow-  
ful ever,

Ever silent, or speaking only of thee and his  
troubles,

He at length had become so tedious to men  
and to maidens, 950

Tedious even to me, that at length I  
bethought me, and sent him



Unto the town of Adayes to trade for mules  
with the Spaniards.

Thence he will follow the Indian trails to the  
Ozark Mountains,

Hunting for furs in the forests, on rivers  
trapping the beaver.

Therefore be of good cheer; we will follow  
the fugitive lover; 955

He is not far on his way, and the fates and  
the streams are against him.

Up and away to-morrow, and through the  
red dew of the morning

We will follow him fast, and bring him back  
to his prison."

Then glad voices were heard, and up from  
the banks of the river,

Borne aloft on his comrades' arms, came  
Michael the fiddler. 960

Long under Basil's roof had he lived like a  
god on Olympus,

Having no other care than dispensing music  
to mortals.

952. *Adayes*. In Texas.

953. *Trails*. Indian paths through the forest, tracks followed by the hunter.

*Ozark Mountains*. A range of mountains west of the Mississippi in the states of Arkansas and Missouri.

956. *Fates*. The goddesses who were supposed to hold the lot or fate of men in their hands.

961. *Olympus*. A mountain in ancient Greece, the home of the gods.



Far renowned was he for his silver locks and  
his fiddle.

"Long live Michael," they cried, "our brave  
Acadian minstrel!"

As they bore him aloft in triumphal proces-  
sion; and straightway 965

Father Felician advanced with Evangeline,  
greeting the old man

Kindly and oft, and recalling the past, while  
Basil, enraptured,

Hailed with hilarious joy his old companions  
and gossips,

Laughing loud and long, and embracing  
mothers and daughters.

Much they marvelled to see the wealth of the  
ci-devant blacksmith, 970

All his domains and his herds, and his patri-  
archal demeanor;

Much they marvelled to hear his tales of the  
soil and the climate,

And of the prairies, whose numberless herds  
were his who would take them;

Each one thought in his heart, that he, too  
would go and do likewise.

970. *Ci-devant*. Former. Fr. *ci*, for *ici*, here, and *devant*, before.

971. *Domains*. The lands ruled over by a king or lord, the land  
around one's house and which one possesses.

*Patriarchal*. Like a patriarch or ruler and father of a family,  
aged and reverend looking.

*Demeanor*. Behavior, carriage, bearing.

Thus they ascended the steps, and crossing  
the breezy veranda, 975  
Entered the hall of the house, where already  
the supper of Basil  
Waited his late return ; and they rested and  
feasted together.

Over the joyous feast the sudden darkness  
descended.  
All was silent without, and, illuming the  
landscape with silver,  
Fair rose the dewy moon and the myriad  
stars ; but within doors, 980  
Brighter than these, shone the faces of friends  
in the glimmering lamplight.  
Then from his station aloft, at the head of  
the table, the herdsman  
Poured forth his heart and his wine together  
in endless profusion.  
Lighting his pipe, that was filled with sweet  
Natchitoches tobacco,  
Thus he spake to his guests, who listened,  
and smiled as they listened : — 985  
“ Welcome once more, my friends, who long  
have been friendless and homeless,  
Welcome once more to a home, that is better  
perchance than the old one !

984. *Natchitoches*. The name of a district in Louisiana.

Here no hungry winter congeals our blood  
like the rivers ;

Here no stony ground provokes the wrath of  
the farmer.

Smoothly the ploughshare runs through the  
soil, as a keel through the water. 990

All the year round the orange-groves are  
in blossom ; and grass grows

More in a single night than a whole Canadian  
summer.

Here, too, numberless herds run wild and  
unclaimed in the prairies :

Here, too, lands may be had for the asking,  
and forests of timber

With a few blows of the axe are hewn and  
framed into houses. 995

After your houses are built and your fields  
are yellow with harvests,

No King George of England shall drive you  
away from your homesteads,

Burning your dwellings and barns, and steal-  
ing your farms and your cattle."

Speaking these words, he blew a wrathful  
cloud from his nostrils,

While his huge brown hand came thundering  
down on the table, 1000

990. *Keel*. The principal timber in a ship, extending along the bottom and supporting the whole frame; a ship itself.

So that the guests all started; and Father  
Felician, astounded,

Suddenly paused, with a pinch of snuff half-  
way to his nostrils.

But the brave Basil resumed, and his words  
were milder and gayer: —

“Only beware of the fever, my friends,  
beware of the fever!

For it is not like that of our cold Acadian  
climate,

1005

Cured by wearing a spider hung round one's  
neck in a nutshell!”

Then there were voices heard at the door,  
and footsteps approaching

Sounded upon the stairs and the floor of the  
breezy veranda.

It was the neighboring Creoles and small  
Acadian planters,

Who had been summoned all to the house of  
Basil the herdsman.

1010

Merry the meeting was of ancient comrades  
and neighbors:

Friend clasped friend in his arms; and they  
who before were as strangers,

1006. *Cured*, etc. The poet here refers to an old charm for the cure of disease. Elias Ashmole, in his diary, April 11, 1861, says, “I took early in the morning a good dose of elixir, and hung three spiders about my neck, and they drove my ague away. Thanks be to God.”

1009. *Creoles*. In Spanish America natives of that country descended from European ancestors.

Meeting in exile, became straightway as  
friends to each other,  
Drawn by the gentle bond of a common  
country together.  
But in the neighboring hall a strain of music,  
proceeding 1015  
From the accordant strings of Michael's  
melodious fiddle,  
Broke up all further speech. Away, like  
children delighted,  
All things forgotten beside, they gave them-  
selves to the maddening  
Whirl of the dizzy dance, as it swept and  
swayed to the music,  
Dreamlike, with beaming eyes and the rush  
of fluttering garments. 1020

Meanwhile, apart at the head of the hall,  
the priest and the herdsman  
Sat, conversing together of past and present  
and future ;  
While Evangeline stood like one entranced,  
for within her  
Olden memories rose, and loud in the midst  
of the music  
Heard she the sound of the sea, and an  
irrepressible sadness 1025

Came o'er her heart, and unseen she stole  
forth into the garden.

Beautiful was the night. Behind the black  
wall of the forest,

Tipping its summit with silver, arose the  
moon. On the river

Fell here and there through the branches a  
tremulous gleam of the moonlight,

Like the sweet thoughts of love on a dark-  
ened and devious spirit. 1030

Near her and round about her, the manifold  
flowers of the garden

Poured out their souls in odors, that were  
their prayers and confessions

Unto the night, as it went its way, like a  
silent Carthusian.

Fuller of fragrance than they, and as heavy  
with shadows and night-dews,

Hung the heart of the maiden. The calm  
and the magical moonlight 1035

Seemed to inundate her soul with indefinable  
longings,

As, through the garden gate, and beneath  
the shade of the oak-trees,

Passed she along the path to the edge of the  
measureless prairie.

1033. *Carthusian*. One of the order of monks named Carthusians, from Chartreuse, a village in France where they were established. They are not allowed to go out of their cells except to church, nor speak to any person without leave.



Silent it lay, with a silvery haze upon it, and  
fire-flies

Gleaming and floating away in mingled and  
infinite numbers. 1040

Over her head the stars, the thoughts of God  
in the heavens,

Shone on the eyes of man, who had ceased to  
marvel and worship,

Save when a blazing comet was seen on the  
walls of that temple,

As if a hand had appeared and written upon  
them "Upharsin."

And the soul of the maiden, between the  
stars and the fire-flies, 1045

Wandered alone, and she cried, "O Gabriel!  
O my beloved!

Art thou so near unto me, and yet I cannot  
behold thee?

Art thou so near unto me, and yet thy voice  
does not reach me?

Ah! how often thy feet have trod this path  
to the prairie!

Ah! how often thine eyes have looked on  
the woodlands around me! 1050

Ah! how often beneath this oak, returning  
from labor,

1043. *That temple.* The sky.

1044. *Upharsin.* See Daniel, v. 25.



Thou hast lain down to rest, and to dream of  
me in thy slumbers !

When shall these eyes behold, these arms be  
folded about thee ! ”

Loud and sudden and near the note of a  
whippoorwill sounded

Like a flute in the woods : and anon, through  
the neighboring thickets, 1055

Farther and farther away it floated and  
dropped into silence.

“ Patience ! ” whispered the oaks from oracular  
caverns of darkness :

And, from the moonlit meadow, a sigh  
responded, “ To-morrow ! ”

Bright rose the sun’ next day ; and all the  
flowers of the garden

Bathed his shining feet with their tears, and  
anointed his tresses 1060

With the delicious balm that they bore in  
their vases of crystal.

“ Farewell ! ” said the priest, as he stood at  
the shadowy threshold ;

“ See that you bring us the Prodigal Son  
from his fasting and famine,

And, too, the Foolish Virgin who slept when  
the bridegroom was coming.”

1057. *Oracular*. Belonging to or speaking like one of the ancient oracles, with authority as from the gods, dimly. Oracles were supposed answers given by the gods at certain places to men’s inquiries; one of these places was a cave in the island of Crete. *L. oro*, to speak.

"Farewell!" answered the maiden, and,  
smiling, with Basil descended 1065

Down to the river's brink, where the boat-  
men already were waiting.

Thus beginning their journey with morning,  
and sunshine, and gladness,

Swiftly they followed the flight of him who  
was speeding before them,

Blown by the blast of fate like a dead leaf  
over the desert.

Not that day, nor the next, nor yet the day  
that succeeded, 1070

Found they trace of his course, in lake or  
forest or river,

Nor, after many days, had they found him;  
but vague and uncertain

Rumors alone were their guides through a  
wild and desolate country;

Till, at the little inn of the Spanish town of  
Adayes,

Weary and worn, they alighted, and learned  
from the garrulous landlord, 1075

That on the day before, with horses and  
guides and companions,

Gabriel left the village, and took the road of  
the prairies.

1075. *Garrulous*. Inclined to talk; talkative.

#### IV:

Far in the West there lies a desert land,  
where the mountains  
Lift, through perpetual snows, their lofty  
and luminous summits.  
Down from their jagged, deep ravines, where  
the gorge, like a gateway, 1080  
Opens a passage rude to the wheels of the  
emigrant's wagon,  
Westward the Oregon flows and the Walle-  
way and Owyhee.  
Eastward with devious course, among the  
Wind-river Mountains,  
Through the Sweet-water Valley precipitate  
leaps the Nebraska;  
And to the south, from Fontaine-qui-bout  
and the Spanish sierras, 1085

1078. *Far in the West*, etc. The poet here describes the vast regions of the United States around and beyond the Rocky Mountains.

1079. *Perpetual*. Continuing without end, here never absent. Fr. *perpétuel*, from L. *perpetuus*.

1080. *Ravine*. A long, deep hollow formed by a mountain stream, a deep glen with steep sides. Fr. *ravin*, from *ravir*, to tear away.

*Gorge*. A narrow passage or entrance, especially between mountains.

1082. *Oregon*. Now named the Columbia River.

1084. *Nebraska*. Nebraska or Platte River, flows into the Missouri.

*Precipitate*. With headlong haste, very rapidly.

1085. *Fontaine-qui-bout*. Fr. boiling spring; the name of a creek running into the Arkansas River.

*Sierras*. Masses of mountains with jagged tops like the teeth of a saw. Span. *sierra*, a saw.

Fretted with sand and rocks, and swept by  
the wind of the desert,  
Numberless torrents, with ceaseless sound,  
descend to the ocean,  
Like the great chords of a harp, in loud and  
solemn vibrations.  
Spreading between these streams are the  
wondrous, beautiful prairies,  
Billowy bays of grass ever rolling in shadow  
and sunshine, 1090  
Bright with luxuriant clusters of roses and  
purple amorphas.  
Over them wandered the buffalo herds, and  
the elk and the roebuck ;  
Over them wandered the wolves, and herds  
of riderless horses ;  
Fires that blast and blight, and winds that  
are weary with travel ;  
Over them wander the scattered tribes of  
Ishmael's children, 1095  
Staining the desert with blood ; and above  
their terrible war-trails

1091. *Amorpha*. A plant with a dark purple flower. It is so named from the irregular form of the flower, sometimes called false indigo or lead-plant.

1092. *Elk*. The largest living species of the deer family.

*Roebuck*. A species of deer much smaller than the elk

1095. *Ishmael's children*. The Indians, who wandered up and down like Ishmael without a fixed home and always at war.

Circles and sails aloft, on pinions majestic,  
the vulture,

Like the implacable soul of a chieftain  
slaughtered in battle,

By invisible stairs ascending and scaling the  
heavens.

Here and there rise smokes from the camps  
of these savage marauders ; 1100

Here and there rise groves from the margins  
of swift-running rivers ;

And the grim, taciturn bear, the anchorite  
monk of the desert,

Climbs down their dark ravines to dig for  
roots by the brook-side ;

And over all is the sky, the clear and crystal-  
line heaven,

Like the protecting hand of God inverted  
above them. 1105

Into this wonderful land, at the base of the  
Ozark Mountains,

Gabriel far had entered, with hunters and  
trappers behind him.

Day after day, with their Indian guides, the  
maiden and Basil

1102. *Taciturn*. Silent by habit or nature.

*Anchorite*. One who retires into a solitary place to give himself up to meditation and religious duties, a hermit. Gr. *anachoretēs*, from *ana*, back, and *choreo*, to retire.

1107. *Trappers*. See note 705.

Followed his flying steps, and thought each  
day to o’ertake him.

Sometimes they saw, or thought they saw,  
the smoke of his camp-fire 1110

Rise in the morning air from the distant  
plain ; but at nightfall,

When they had reached the place, they found  
only embers and ashes.

And, though their hearts were sad at times  
and their bodies were weary,

Hope still guided them on, as the magic *Fata*  
*Morgana*

Showed them her lakes of light, that retreated  
and vanished before them. 1115

Once, as they sat by their evening fire,  
there silently entered

Into the little camp an Indian woman, whose  
features

Wore deep traces of sorrow, and patience as  
great as her sorrow.

She was a Shawnee woman returning home  
to her people,

1114. *Fata Morgana*. A name given to a striking deception of the eyesight, which has been principally remarked in the Strait of Messina, between the coasts of Sicily and Calabria. The images of men, horses, towers, palaces, columns, trees, etc., are occasionally seen from the coast, sometimes in the water, and sometimes in the air or at the surface of the water. It is a kind of mirage. Italian, because supposed to be the work of a *fata* or fairy called *Morgana*.

1119. *Shawnee*. An Indian tribe now situated west of the Mississippi.



From the far-off hunting-grounds of the cruel  
Camanches, 1120

Where her Canadian husband, a Coureur-des-  
Bois, had been murdered.

Touched were their hearts at her story, and  
warmest and friendliest welcome

Gave they, with words of cheer, and she sat  
and feasted among them

On the buffalo meat and the venison cooked  
on the embers.

But when their meal was done, and Basil and  
all his companions, 1125

Worn with the long day's march and the  
chase of the deer and the bison,

Stretched themselves on the ground, and  
slept where the quivering fire-light

Flashed on their swarthy cheeks, and their  
forms wrapped up in their blankets,

Then at the door of Evangeline's tent she  
sat and repeated

Slowly, with soft, low voice, and the charm  
of her Indian accent, 1130

All the tale of her love, with its pleasures,  
and pains, and reverses.

Much Evangeline wept at the tale, and to  
know that another

1120. *Camanches*. An Indian tribe of Mexico and Texas, extremely warlike and fond of plunder.



Hapless heart like her own had loved and had  
    been disappointed.  
Moved to the depths of her soul by pity and  
    woman's compassion,  
Yet in her sorrow pleased that one who had  
    suffered was near her. 1135  
She in turn related her love and all its  
    disasters  
Mute with wonder the Shawnee sat, and  
    when she had ended  
Still was mute ; but at length, as if a mys-  
    terious horror  
Passed through her brain, she spake, and  
    repeated the tale of the Mowis,  
Mowis, the bridegroom of snow, who won  
    and wedded a maiden, 1140  
But, when the morning came, arose and  
    passed from the wigwam,  
Fading and melting away and dissolving into  
    the sunshine,  
Till she beheld him no more, though she  
    followed far into the forest.  
Then, in those sweet, low tones, that seemed  
    like a weird incantation,

1139. *Mowis*, etc. The Indian woman here relates traditions current among her people.

1144. *Weird*. Unearthly, not human.

*Incantation*. A magical song, spell, or charm.

Told she the tale of the fair Lillinau, who  
was wooed by a phantom, 1145  
That, through the pines o'er her father's  
lodge, in the hush of the twilight,  
Breathed like the evening wind, and whis-  
pered love to the maiden,  
Till she followed his green and waving plume  
through the forest,  
And never more returned, nor was seen  
again by her people.  
Silent with wonder and strange surprise,  
Evangeline listened 1150  
To the soft flow of her magical words, till the  
region around her  
Seemed like enchanted ground, and her  
swarthy guest the enchantress.  
Slowly over the tops of the Ozark Mountains  
the moon rose,  
Lighting the little tent, and with a myste-  
rious splendor  
Touching the sombre leaves, and embracing  
and filling the woodland. 1155  
With a delicious sound the brook rushed by,  
and the branches  
Swayed and sighed overhead in scarcely  
audible whispers.  
Filled with the thoughts of love was Evange-  
line's heart, but a secret,

Subtile sense crept in of pain and indefinite  
terror,

As the cold poisonous snake creeps into the  
nest of the swallow. 1160

It was no earthly fear. A breath from the  
region of spirits

Seemed to float in the air of night; and she  
felt for a moment

That, like the Indian maid, she, too, was  
pursuing a phantom.

With this thought she slept, and the fear and  
the phantom had vanished.

Early upon the morrow the march was  
resumed; and the Shawnee 1165

Said, as they journeyed along, "On the west-  
ern slope of these mountains

Dwells in his little village the Black Robe  
chief of the Mission.

Much he teaches the people, and tells them  
of Mary and Jesus;

Loud laugh their hearts with joy, and weep  
with pain, as they hear him."

Then with a sudden and secret emotion,  
Evangeline answered, 1170

1167. *Black Robe chief.* The priest, in allusion to the color of his  
dress.

"Let us go to the Mission, for there good tidings await us !"

Thither they turned their steeds ; and behind a spur of the mountains,

Just as the sun went down, they heard a murmur of voices,

And in a meadow green and broad, by the bank of a river,

Saw the tents of the Christians, the tents of the Jesuit Mission. 1175

Under a towering oak, that stood in the midst of the village,

Knelt the Black Robe chief with his children. A crucifix fastened

High on the trunk of the tree, and overshadowed by grape-vines,

Looked with its agonized face on the multitude kneeling beneath it.

This was their rural chapel. Aloft through the intricate arches 1180

Of its aerial roof, arose the chant of their vespers,

Mingling its notes with the soft susurrus and sighs of the branches.

1175. *Jesuit*. One of the Society of Jesus, a religious order founded by Ignatius Loyola, a Spaniard, in the sixteenth century. They soon spread over most parts of the world as missionaries.

1181. *Aerial*. High in air, airy.

*Vespers*. The evening service in the Catholic Church.

1182. *Susurrus*. A continued hissing sound, a whisper.

Silent, with heads uncovered, the travellers,  
nearer approaching,  
Knelt on the swarded floor, and joined in the  
evening devotions.

But when the service was done, and the  
benediction had fallen 1185

Forth from the hands of the priest, like seed  
from the hands of the sower,

Slowly the reverend man advanced to the  
strangers, and bade them

Welcome: and when they replied, he smiled  
with benignant expression,

Hearing the home-like sounds of his mother-  
tongue in the forest,

And, with words of kindness, conducted  
them into his wigwam. 1190

There upon mats and skins they reposed,  
and on cakes of the maize-ear

Feasted, and slaked their thirst from the  
water-gourd of the teacher.

Soon was their story told; and the priest  
with solemnity answered:—

“Not six suns have risen and set since Gab-  
riel, seated

1185. *Benediction.* The blessing pronounced by the priest on the congregation before dismissal.

1192. *Water-gourd.* A vessel for holding water, so named from being shaped like the outer shell of the fruit called a gourd.

1194. *Six suns.* Six days, or the number of times that the sun has risen.

On this mat by my side, where now the  
maiden reposes, 1195

Told me this same sad tale ; then arose and  
continued his journey ! ”

Soft was the voice of the priest, and he spake  
with an accent of kindness ;

But on Evangeline's heart fell his words as in  
winter the snow-flakes

Fall into some lone nest from which the birds  
have departed.

“ Far to the north he has gone,” continued  
the priest ; “ but in autumn, 1200

When the chase is done, will return again to  
the Mission.”

Then Evangeline said, and her voice was  
meek and submissive,

“ Let me remain with thee, for my soul is sad  
and afflicted.”

So seemed it wise and well unto all ; and  
betimes on the morrow,

Mounting his Mexican steed, with his Indian  
guides and companions, 1205

Homeward Basil returned, and Evangeline  
stayed at the Mission.

Slowly, slowly, slowly the days succeeded  
each other, —



Days and weeks and months ; and the fields  
    of maize that were springing  
Green from the ground when a stranger she  
    came, now waving above her,  
Lifted their slender shafts, with leaves inter-  
    lacing, and forming 1210  
Cloisters for mendicant crows and granaries  
    pillaged by squirrels.  
Then in the golden weather the maize was  
    husked, and the maidens  
Blushed at each blood-red ear, for that  
    betokened a lover,  
But at the crooked laughed, and called it a  
    thief in the cornfield.  
Even the blood-red ear to Evangeline brought  
    not her lover. 1215  
"Patience !" the priest would say ; "have  
    faith, and thy prayer will be answered !"  
Look at this vigorous plant that lifts its head  
    from the meadow,  
See how its leaves are turned to the north,  
    as true as the magnet ;  
This is the compass-flower, that the finger of  
    God has planted

1211. *Cloister*. An arcade or long passage arched over, in which the monks walked for exercise.

1211. *Mendicant*. Begging, living upon charity. It is the name of an order of begging friars or monks.

1219. *Compass-Flower*. A handsome American plant, allied to the sun-flower. Certain of its leaves when growing, turn to the north and south.



Here in the houseless wild, to direct the  
traveller's journey 1220

Over the sea-like, pathless, limitless waste  
of the desert.

Such in the soul of man is faith. The blossoms of passion,

Gay and luxuriant flowers, are brighter and  
fuller of fragrance.

But they beguile us, and lead us astray, and  
their odor is deadly.

Only this humble plant can guide us here,  
and hereafter 1225

Crown us with asphodel flowers, that are wet  
with the dews of nepenthe."

So came the autumn, and passed, and the  
winter,— yet Gabriel came not ;

Blossomed the opening spring, and the notes  
of the robin and blue-bird

Sounded sweet upon wold and in wood, yet  
Gabriel came not.

But on the breath of the summer winds a  
rumor was wafted 1230

1226. *Asphodel*. A plant of the lily kind, with flowers of different colors and great beauty.

*Nepenthe*. A magic drink anciently believed to make persons forget their sorrow; the word is now used of a medicine which relieves pain.

1229. *Wold*. A plain, an open country.

Sweeter than song of bird, or hue or odor  
of blossom.

Far to the north and east, it said, in the  
Michigan forests,

Gabriel had his lodge by the banks of the  
Saginaw River,

And, with returning guides, that sought the  
lakes of St. Lawrence,

Saying a sad farewell, Evangeline went from  
the Mission. 1235

When over weary ways, by long and perilous  
marches,

She had attained at length the depths of the  
Michigan forests,

Found she the hunter's lodge deserted and  
fallen to ruin !

Thus did the long sad years glide on, and  
in seasons and places

Divers and distant far was seen the wander-  
ing maiden ; — 1240

Now in the Tents of Grace of the meek  
Moravian Missions,

1233. *Saginaw*. A river of Michigan, flowing into Saginaw Bay, a branch of Lake Huron.

1234. *St. Lawrence*. The river which issues from Lake Ontario, and drains the chain of great lakes in North America. It has a total length of over 2000 miles.

1241. *Moravians*. A name given to a religious body which took its rise in Moravia in Austria at the time of the Reformation. The Moravians are distinguished for their humble piety, and have established missions in almost every part of the world.

Now in the noisy camps and the battle-fields  
of the army,

Now in secluded hamlets, in towns and  
populous cities.

Like a phantom she came, and passed away  
unremembered.

Fair was she and young, when in hope began  
the long journey ; 1245

Faded was she and old, when in disappoint-  
ment it ended.

Each succeeding year stole something away  
from her beauty,

Leaving behind it, broader and deeper, the  
gloom and the shadow.

Then there appeared and spread faint streaks  
of gray o'er her forehead,

Dawn of another life, that broke o'er her  
earthly horizon, 1250

As in the eastern sky the first faint streaks  
of the morning.

# V.

In that delightful land which is washed by  
the Delaware's waters,  
Guarding in sylvan shades the name of Penn  
the apostle,  
Stands on the banks of its beautiful stream  
the city he founded.  
There all the air is balm, and the peach is the  
emblem of beauty, 1255  
And the streets still re-echo the names of the  
trees of the forest,  
As if they fain would appease the Dryads  
whose haunts they molested.  
There from the troubled sea had Evangeline  
landed, an exile,  
Finding among the children of Penn a home  
and a country.  
There old René Leblanc had died ; and when  
he departed, 1260

1252. *Delaware.* The river forming the eastern boundary of the state of Pennsylvania, and falling into Delaware Bay.

1253. *Penn the apostle.* William Penn, an Englishman, and member of the Society of Friends. He suffered imprisonment in England for preaching the gospel, and emigrated to America with some of his brethren to enjoy liberty of conscience. He founded the state of Pennsylvania in 1682, which was so named in honor of ...m. In his dealings with the native Indians he was noted for his love of justice.

1254. *City he founded.* Philadelphia (meaning "brotherly love").

1256. *Streets still re-echo.* Many of the streets of Philadelphia bear the names of trees that formerly grew where the city now stands, or still grow in the neighborhood.

1257. *Dryads.* The nymphs or goddesses who presided over trees or woods.

Saw at his side only one of all his hundred  
descendants.

Something at least there was in the friendly  
streets of the city,

Something that spake to her heart, and made  
her no longer a stranger ;

And her ears were pleased with the Thee and  
Thou of the Quakers,

For it recalled the past, the old Acadian  
country, 1265

Where all men were equal, and all were  
brothers and sisters.

So, when the fruitless search, the disap-  
pointed endeavor,

Ended, to recommence no more upon earth,  
uncomplaining,

Thither as leaves to the light, were turned  
her thoughts and her foot-steps.

As from a mountain's top the rainy mists of  
the morning 1270

Roll away, and afar we behold the landscape  
below us,

Sun-illumined, with shining rivers and cities  
and hamlets,

So fell the mists from her mind, and she saw  
the world far below her.

1264. *Thee and Thou.* The Society of Friends or Quakers use *thee* and *thou* instead of *you* when addressing anyone.

Dark no longer, but all illumined with love ;  
and the pathway

Which she had climbed so far, lying smooth  
and fair in the distance. 1275

Gabriel was not forgotten. Within her  
heart was his image,

Clothed in the beauty of love and youth, as  
last she beheld him, .

Only more beautiful made by his deathlike  
silence and absence,

Into her thoughts of him time entered not,  
for it was not.

Over him years had no power ; he was not  
changed, but transfigured ; 1280

He had become to her heart as one who is  
dead, and not absent ;

Patience and abnegation of self, and devotion  
to others,

This was the lesson a life of trial and sorrow  
had taught her.

So was her love diffused, but, like to some  
odorous spices,

Suffered no waste nor loss, though filling the  
air with aroma. 1285

1280. *Transfigured*. Changed in form or appearance.

1282. *Abnegation*. Denial.

1285. *Aroma*. The sweet smell of plants, or the quality which gives them a sweet smell.



Other hope had she none, nor wish in life,  
but to follow

Meekly, with reverent steps, the sacred feet  
of her Saviour.

Thus many years she lived as a Sister of  
Mercy ; frequenting

Lonely and wretched roofs in the crowded  
lanes of the city,

Where distress and want concealed them-  
selves from the sunlight, 1290

Where disease and sorrow in garrets lan-  
guished neglected.

Night after night when the world was asleep,  
as the watchman repeated

Loud, through the gusty streets, that all was  
well in the city,

High at some lonely window he saw the  
light of her taper.

Day after day, in the gray of the dawn, as  
slow through the suburbs 1295

Plodded the German farmer, with flowers  
and fruits for the market,

1288. *Sisters of Mercy.* An order of women belonging to the Catholic Church, bound by religious vows to spend their lives in visiting the sick and criminals, and such like acts of charity and mercy.

1293. In early days before the advent of policemen, watchmen patrolled the streets of cities at night time, calling out the hours, finishing with the cry "All is well."

1295. *Suburbs.* Now Germantown.



Met he that meek, pale face, returning home  
from its watchings.

Then it came to pass that a pestilence fell  
on the city,  
Presaged by wondrous signs, and mostly by  
flocks of wild pigeons,  
Darkening the sun in their flight, with  
naught in their craws but an acorn. <sup>1300</sup>  
And, as the tides of the sea arise in the  
month of September,  
Flooding some silver stream, till it spreads to  
a lake in the meadow,  
So death flooded life, and, o'erflowing its  
natural margin,  
Spread to a brackish lake, the silver streams  
of existence.  
Wealth had no power to bribe, nor beauty to  
charm the oppressor ; <sup>1305</sup>  
But all perished alike beneath the scourge of  
his anger ; —  
Only, alas ! the poor, who had neither friends  
nor attendants,  
Crept away to die in the almshouse, home of  
the homeless.

1299. *Presage*. To foreshow, to show by a present sign what is about to happen.

1304. *Brackish*. Salt in some degree, a word applied to fresh water mixed with salt water so that it is spoiled for use.

Then in the suburbs it stood, in the midst of  
meadows and woodlands ;—

Now the city surrounds it ; but still with its  
gateway and wicket 1310

Meek, in the midst of splendor, its humble  
wall seemed to echo

Softly the words of the Lord : — “ The poor  
ye always have with you.”

Thither, by night and by day, came the  
Sister of Mercy. The dying

Looked up into her face, and thought, indeed,  
to behold there

Gleams of celestial light encircle her forehead  
with splendor, 1315

Such as the artist paints o’er the brows of  
saints and apostles,

Or such as hangs by night o’er a city seen at  
a distance.

Unto their eyes it seemed the lamps of the  
city celestial,

Into whose shining gates erelong their spirits  
would enter.

Thus on a Sabbath morn, through the  
streets, deserted and silent, 1320

Wending her quiet way, she entered the  
door of the almshouse.

1310. *Wicket.* A small door in a large one.

Sweet on the summer air was the odor of  
flowers in the garden ;  
And she paused on her way to gather the  
fairest among them,  
That the dying once more might rejoice in  
their fragrance and beauty.  
Then, as she mounted the stairs to the corri-  
dors, cooled by the east wind, 1325  
Distant and soft on her ear fell the chimes  
from the belfry of Christ Church,  
While, intermingled with these, across the  
meadows were wafted,  
Sounds of psalms, that were sung by the  
Swedes in their church at Wicaco.  
Soft as descending wings fell the calm of  
the hour on her spirit ;  
Something within her said, " At length thy  
trials are ended ;" 1330  
And, with light in her looks, she entered the  
chambers of sickness.  
Noiselessly moved about the assiduous, care-  
ful attendants,  
Moistening the feverish lip, and the aching  
brow, and in silence  
Closing the sightless eyes of the dead, and  
concealing their faces,

1332. *Assiduous*. Attentive, regular in attendance.

Where on their pallets they lay, like drifts  
of snow by the roadside. 1335

Many a languid head, upraised as Evangeline  
entered,

Turned on its pillow of pain to gaze while  
she passed, for her presence

Fell on their hearts like a ray of the sun on  
the walls of a prison.

And as she looked around, she saw how  
Death, the consoler,

Laying his hand upon many a heart had  
healed it forever. 1340

Many familiar forms had disappeared in the  
night time ;

Vacant their places were, or filled already by  
strangers.

Suddenly, as if arrested by fear or a feel-  
ing of wonder,

Still she stood, with her colorless lips apart,  
while a shudder

Ran through her frame, and, forgotten, the  
flowerets dropped from her fingers, 1345

And from her eyes and cheeks the light and  
bloom of the morning.

1335. *Pallet.* A small bed originally of straw.

1345. *Flowerets.* Small flowers.

Then there escaped from her lips a cry of  
such terrible anguish,

That the dying heard it, and started up from  
their pillows.

On the pallet before her was stretched the  
form of an old man.

Long, and thin, and gray were the locks that  
shaded his temples ; 1350

But, as he lay in the morning light, his face  
for a moment

Seemed to assume once more the forms of its  
earlier manhood ;

As are wont to be changed the faces of those  
who are dying.

Hot and red on his lips still burned the flush  
of the fever,

As if life, like the Hebrew, with blood had  
besprinkled its portals, 1355

That the Angel of Death might see the sign,  
and pass over.

Motionless, senseless, dying, he lay, and his  
spirit exhausted

Seemed to be sinking down through infinite  
depths in the darkness,

Darkness of slumber and death, forever sink-  
ing and sinking.

Then through those realms of shade, in multiplied reverberations, 1360

Heard he that cry of pain, and through the hush that succeeded

Whispered a gentle voice, in accents tender and saint-like,

"Gabriel! O my beloved!" and died away into silence.

Then he beheld, in a dream, once more the home of his childhood;

Green Acadian meadows, with sylvan rivers among them, 1365

Village, and mountain, and woodlands; and, walking under their shadow,

As in the days of her youth, Evangeline rose in his vision.

Tears came into his eyes; and as slowly he lifted his eye-lids,

Vanished the vision away, but Evangeline knelt by his bedside.

Vainly he strove to whisper her name, for the accents unuttered 1370

Died on his lips, and their motion revealed what his tongue would have spoken.

Vainly he strove to rise; and Evangeline kneeling beside him,

1360. *Reverberation.* Act of echoing or sounding backward and forward.

Kissed his dying lips, and laid his head on  
her bosom.

Sweet was the light of his eyes; but it  
suddenly sank into darkness,

As when a lamp is blown out by a gust of  
wind at a casement. 1375

All was ended now, the hope and the fear,  
and the sorrow,

All the aching of heart, the restless unsat-  
isfied longing,

All the dull, deep pain, and constant anguish  
of patience!

And as she pressed once more the lifeless  
head to her bosom,

Meekly she bowed her own, and murmured,  
"Father, I thank thee!" 1380

---

Still stands the forest primeval; but far  
away from its shadow,

Side by side, in their nameless graves, the  
lovers are sleeping.

Under the humble walls of the little Catholic  
church-yard,

In the heart of the city, they lie, unknown  
and unnoticed.

Daily the tides of life go ebbing and flowing  
beside them, 1385



Thousands of throbbing hearts, where theirs  
are at rest and forever,  
Thousands of aching brains, where theirs no  
longer are busy ;  
Thousands of toiling hands, where theirs have  
ceased from their labors,  
Thousands of weary feet, where theirs have  
completed their journey !

Still stands the forest primeval ; but under  
the shade of its branches 1390  
Dwells another race, with other customs and  
language.  
Only along the shore of the mournful and  
misty Atlantic  
Linger a few Acadian peasants, whose fathers  
from exile  
Wandered back to their native land to die in  
its bosom.  
In the fisherman's cot the wheel and the loom  
are still busy ; 1395  
Maidens still wear their Norman caps and  
their kirtles of homespun,  
And by the evening fire repeat Evangeline's  
story,

1392. *Misty Atlantic*. So called from the fogs which prevail in the Atlantic off the coast of Nova Scotia. See note 672.

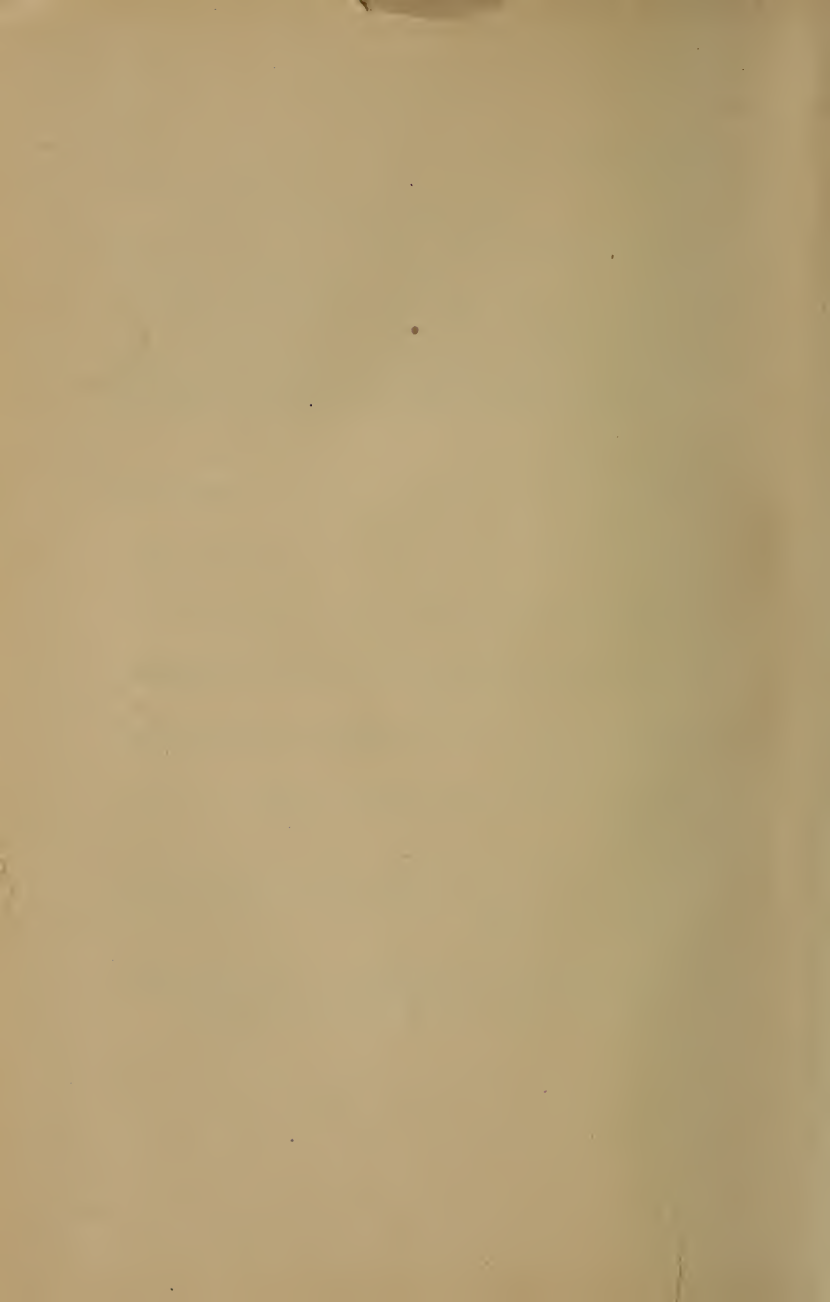
1396. *Norman caps*. High white caps still worn by the women in the ancient province of Normandy in France.

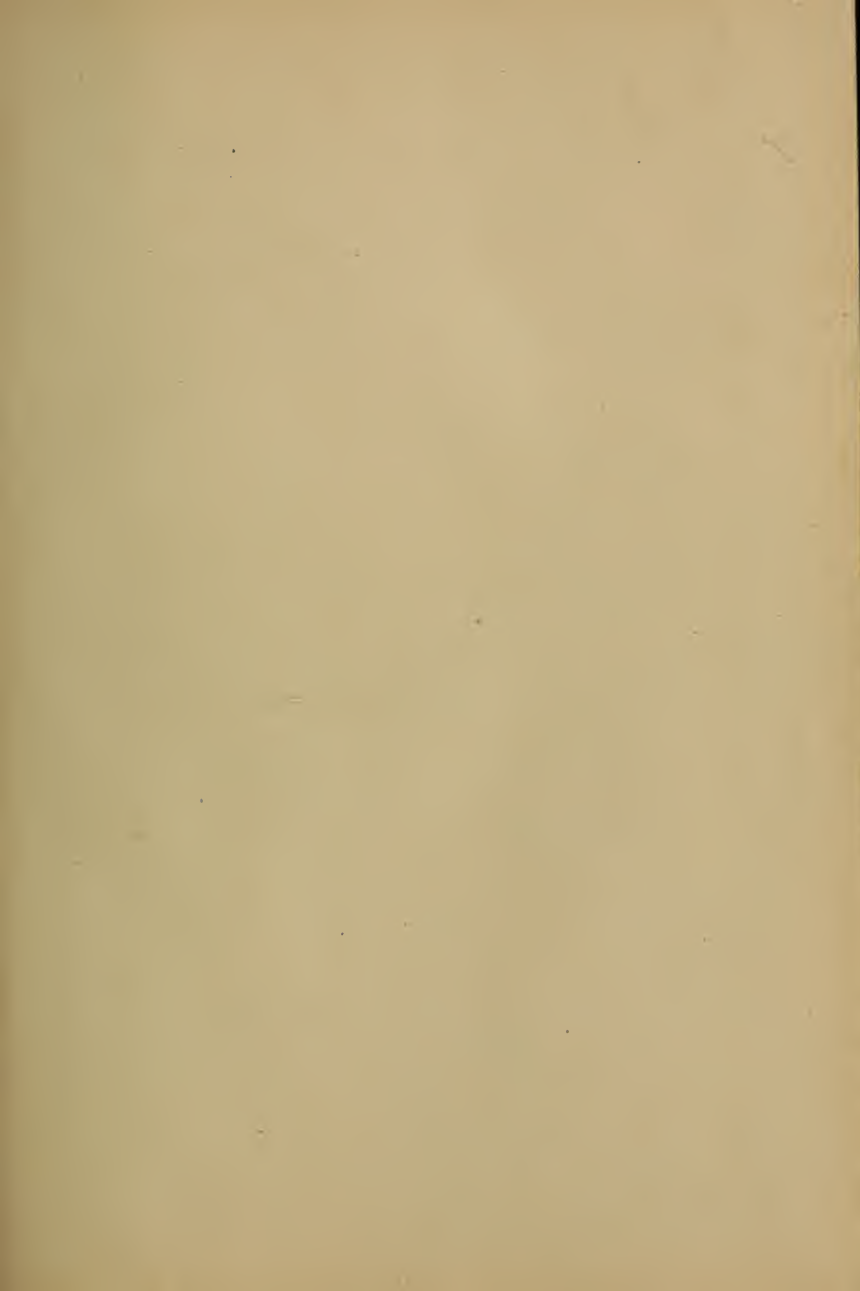
While from its rocky caverns the deep-  
voiced, neighboring ocean  
Speaks, and in accents disconsolate answers  
the wail of the forest.

1398. *While from its rocky caverns, etc.* See lines 5, 6. The poet beautifully concludes his tale of the vicissitudes of human life by repeating some of the opening lines of the poem. The heroes of his drama have long since passed away, a few descendants alone are left to tell the story of their love and trials; but the same unchanging Ocean "speaks, and in accents disconsolate answers the wail of the Forest."

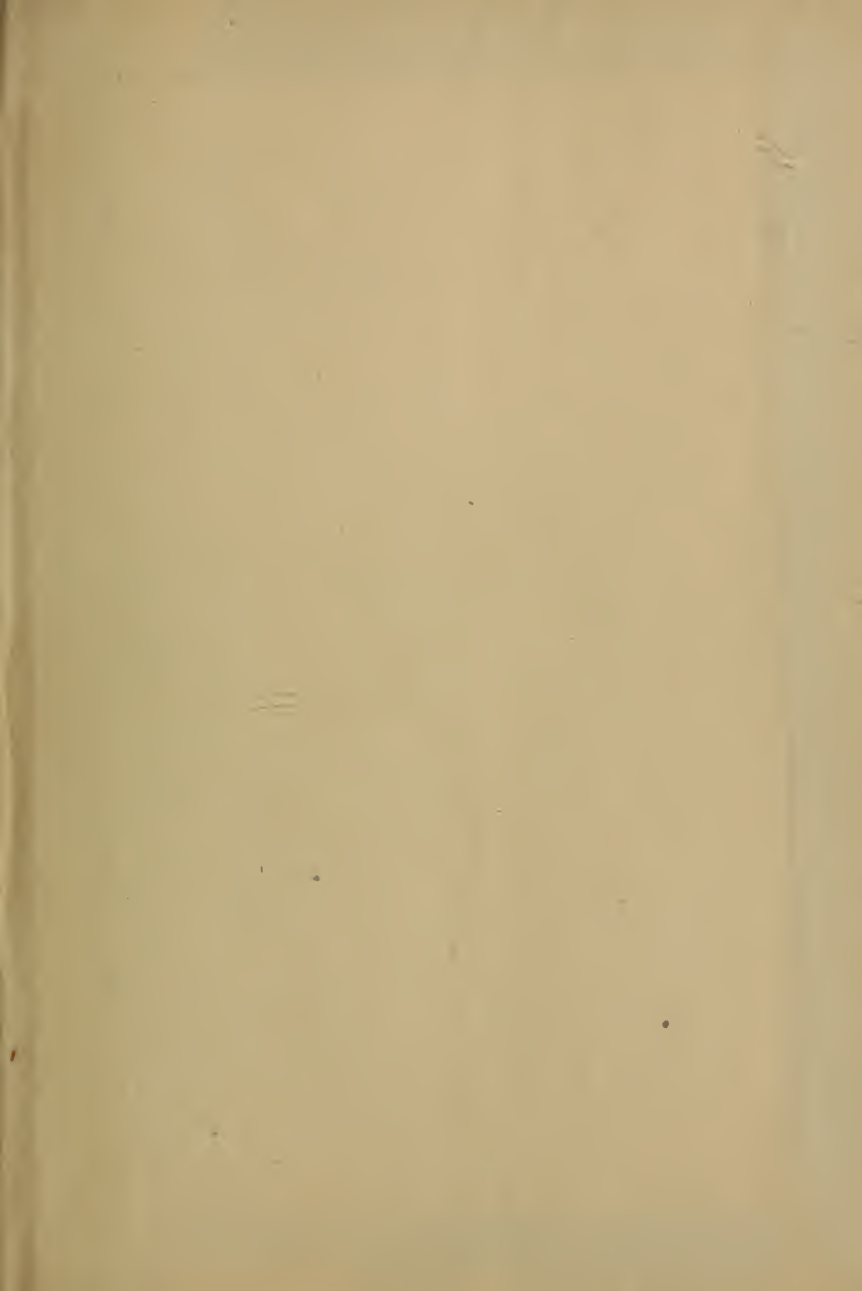
## EXERCISES.

1. Make a list of the persons mentioned by name in the poem, and state what relation they bore to each other.
2. Give a brief summary in your own words of the First Part of the poem.
3. Give a similar summary of the Second Part.
4. Name the four regions of America in which the principal scenes of the tale are laid.
5. Name the three great rivers introduced in the tale.
6. Give in your own words a short summary of the old notary's story about the statue of Justice.
7. Also of the two Indian traditions told to Evangeline by the Shawnee woman.
8. Mention some of the superstitions believed in by the Acadians.
9. Mention some of the animals alluded to in the poem.
10. The Black Robe chief likens faith in the soul of man to a certain plant found in the prairies. What is it called?
11. What is meant by *personification*? Give any examples of it which you remember in the poem.





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